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SONG OF A FELLOW-WORKER.

I FOUND a fellow-worker when I deemed I
toiled alone :
My toil was fashioning thought and sound,
and his was hewing stone ;
I worked in the palace of my brain, he in the
common street,
And it seemed his toil was great and hard,
while mine was great and sweet.

I said, O fellow-worker, yea, for I am a worker
too,
The heart nigh fails me many a day, but how
is it with you ?
For while I toil great tears of joy will some-
times fill my eyes,
And when I form my perfect work it lives and
never dies.

I carve the marble of pure thought until the
thought takes form,
Until it gleams before my soul and makes the
world grow warm ;
Until there comes the glorious voice and
words that seem divine,
And the music reaches all men's hearts and
draws them into mine.

And yet for days it seems my heart shall
blossom never more,
And the burden of my loneliness lies on me
very sore :
Therefore, O hewer of the stones that pave
base human ways,
How canst thou bear the years till death, made
of such thankless days ?

Then he replied : Ere sunrise, when the pale
lips of the day
Sent forth an earnest thrill of breath at warmth
of the first ray,
A great thought rose within me, how, while
men asleep had lain,
The thousand labours of the world had grown
up once again.

The sun grew on the world, and on my soul
the thought grew too —
A great appalling sun, to light my soul the
long day through.
I felt the world's whole burden for a moment,
then began
With man's gigantic strength to do the labour
of one man.

I went forth hastily, and lo ! I met a hundred
men,
The worker with the chisel and the worker
with the pen, —
The restless toilers after good, who sow and
never reap,
And one who maketh music for their souls
that may not sleep.

Each passed me with a dauntless look, and my
undaunted eyes
Were almost softened as they passed with
tears that strove to rise
At sight of all those labours, and because that
every one,
Ay, the greatest, would be greater if my little
were undone.

They passed me, having faith in me, and in
our several ways,
Together we began to-day as on the other
days :
I felt their mighty hands at work, and, as the
day wore through,
Perhaps they felt that even I was helping
somewhat too :

Perhaps they felt, as with those hands they
lifted mightily
The burden once more laid upon the world so
heavily,
That while they nobly held it as each man can
do and bear,
It did not wholly fall my side as though no
man were there.

And so we toil together many a day from
morn till night,
I in the lower depths of life, they on the
lovely height ;
For though the common stones are mine, and
they have lofty cares,
Their work begins where this leaves off, and
mine is part of theirs.

And 'tis not wholly mine or theirs I think of
through the day,
But the great eternal thing we make together,
I and they ;
Far in the sunset I behold a city that man
owns,
Made fair with all their nobler toil, built of
my common stones.

Then noonward, as the task grows light with
all the labour done,
The single thought of all the day becomes a
joyous one ;
For, rising in my heart at last where it has
lain so long,
It thrills up seeking for a voice, and grows
almost a song.

But when the evening comes, indeed, the
words have taken wing,
The thought sings in me still, but I am all too
tired to sing ;
Therefore, O you my friend, who serve the
world with minstrelsy,
Among our fellow-workers' songs make that
one song for me.

Athenæum. ARTHUR O'SHAUGHNESSY.

From Macmillan's Magazine.
NATURAL RELIGION.

I.

THERE are two very opposite parties among us at the present day, whose language is in one respect very strikingly similar. The Christian Church has from the beginning spoken with a certain contempt of learning. "The wisdom of the world," "oppositions of science falsely so called," "to the Greeks foolishness;" these are the phrases of one of the earliest and highest of Christian authorities. In our own country the two most powerful of Christian movements, Puritanism and Evangelicalism, have been distinctly marked with this characteristic feature, although it might be possible to mention one or two learned Evangelicals and several learned Puritans. That there have been, and are, a vast number of men at the same time Christian and learned, does not affect the fact that Christianity holds itself aloof from and in a manner superior to learning. Such men, where their Christian feeling has been intense, have often spoken disparagingly of their own learning, as of a thing of little value, and have taken a pride in placing themselves on a level with the ignorant. If it is true that eloquent vindications of learning from the Christian point of view might be quoted, lofty assertions of the sympathy of Christianity for whatever is true and elevated, such assertions do not prove so much as is proved by the necessity of making them. If we admire them, it is rather because we love learning than because we love Christianity. We admire them as noble deviations from the Christian tradition, in a point where we have a misgiving that Christianity may be narrow. Yet this contempt for *learning* no Christian would admit to be equivalent to a contempt for *knowledge*. Knowledge, a certain kind of knowledge, Christians maintain to be the only thing worth having. Wealth, power, everything that is counted desirable, they despise in comparison with a certain kind of knowledge. It is among these things comparatively despicable that they class what is commonly called learning. They despise it

not *as* learning, but as learning comparatively worthless in quality, as being but a counterfeit of the true learning which it is happiness and salvation to possess.

Now in this respect quite an opposite school hold the very same language. Scientific men resemble Christians, in treating with great contempt what goes by the name of learning and philosophy, in comparison with another sort of wisdom which they believe themselves to possess. Like Christians, they are no contemners of knowledge; on the contrary, in praise of knowledge they grow eloquent, and use language of scriptural elevation. "Wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom; and with all thy getting, get understanding." It is their unceasing cry that all good is to be expected from the increase of true knowledge; that the happiness, both of the race and individuals, depends upon the advance of real science, and the application of it to human life. Yet they have a contempt for learning, which is just as Christian in its tone as their love for knowledge. "Erudition" and "philosophy" are terms of contempt in their mouths. The first they consider to be, for the most part, a criminal waste of time; philosophy they denounce as consisting mainly of empty words, and offering solutions either imaginary or unintelligible of problems which are either imaginary or unintelligible themselves. In some scientific men this feeling of contempt for learning is concealed; they will profess to admire scholarship and erudition, speaking of it as a graceful accomplishment; and it is only in unguarded moments that they betray their conviction that it is nothing more; others proclaim it loudly, and some even wish to bring public opinion to bear upon the matter, so as to prevent as an immorality the acquiring of useless knowledge.

Thus, the old religious school, and that new school whose convictions we see now gradually acquiring the character of a religion, agree in combining a passionate love for what they believe true knowledge, with a contempt for so-called learning and philosophy. The common enemy of both is what the one school calls, and

the other might well call, "the wisdom of the world." But though agreeing so far, these two schools hate their common enemy much less than they hate each other. For each regards the "true wisdom" of the other as worse and more mischievous than the wisdom of the world which each rejects. To the scientific school the Christian *γνώσις* is a mystical superstition, compared with which "learning and philosophy" are science itself. To the Christian, modern science is a darkness compared with which the science that St. Paul rejected might almost be called Christianity.

Nothing is so terrible as this clashing of opposite religions. Differences on important subjects are always painful, but the direct shock of contrary enthusiasms has something appalling about it. That one man's highest truth should be another man's deadliest falsehood; that one man should be ready to die in disinterested self-devotion for a cause which another man is equally ready to oppose at the sacrifice of his life; this is a horror which is none the less horrible because it has often been witnessed on this perplexed planet. But often it has been seen, long after the conflict was over, that there had been misapprehension; that the difference of opinion was not really anything like so complete as it seemed. Nay, it has often happened that a later generation has seen the difference to be very small indeed, and has wondered that so much could have been made of it. In such cases the mind is relieved of that fancy of a radical discord in human nature. We see that self-devotions have not really clashed in such fell antagonism. We see that with self-devotion there may mix less noble feelings, and that the immitigable hostility of religious strife may be caused by a mixture of ardent conviction with some impulses less noble, with some that are blamable and some that are even ludicrous, with mere pugnacity, with the passion of gratifying self-importance, with the half noble pleasure that there is in fighting, and the ignoble pleasure that there is in giving pain.

It would certainly be hard enough to

show that the present strife between Christianity and science is one in which insignificant differences are magnified by the imagination of the combatants. The question is nothing less than this, whether we are to regard the grave with assured hope, and the ties between human beings as indissoluble by death; or, on the other hand, to dismiss the thought of a future life as too doubtful to be worth considering, even if not absolutely chimerical. No reasoning can make such a difference into a small one. But even where the differences are so great, it may still be worth while to call attention to the points of agreement. In our penury of truth we ought to make the very utmost of our agreements. Let us rescue whatever we can from the waves of doubt; sailors thrown shipwrecked on a desert island must save what they can, not what they would. If there is some truth, however small, upon which all can agree, then there is some action upon which all can unite; and who can tell how much may be done by anything so rare as absolute unanimity? Moreover, if we look closely, we shall always find our agreement to be more than we had expected. It seems as if men valued difference of opinion for its own sake. We seem not to care for any doctrine that is not controvertible. We talk with contempt of platitudes and truisms. Platitudes and truisms do not work up into interesting books; but if our object is to accomplish something for human life, we shall scarcely find any truth serviceable that has not been rubbed into a truism, and scarcely any maxim that has not been worn into a platitude. But men seldom apply to truths this test of practice; they try them by the other test, which is the test of talk and debate. Thus, it happens that ten points of agreement seem less important in most assemblies than one point of difference. Why is it men do not discover by experience the waste that is caused by this method? Either they must have a great deal of time on their hands; or else they have most unreasonable expectations from controversy. But I return to my point.

We are all familiar with the language

used by Christians in disparagement of learning. God, they say, has revealed to men all that is essential for them to know. By the side of revealed knowledge what the human intellect can discover for itself is of little importance. If it seem to clash with revelation it is mischievous; if not it may be useful in a subordinate degree. But at the best it is contemptible by the side of the "one thing needful;" and the greatest discoverer that ever lived is a trifle compared with the most simple-minded Christian who has studied to fulfil the requirements of the gospel.

There is indeed a true erudition and a true philosophy, the subject of which is God's revelation itself. Scholars, profoundly read in the sources of theology, whether they be supposed to be the Bible or the fathers of the Church; philosophers who have made the Christian revelation their basis, or have collected and elucidated the evidence of it—these are truly wise, and escape the censure of frivolity under which secular learning lies; but even these, illustrious and venerable as they may be, will acknowledge that there is a wisdom beyond their own, which the humblest Christian may possess, the wisdom of simple belief and love.

We are less familiar as yet with the invectives of scientific men against what has long passed for learning and philosophy in the world. Different sections of the scientific school bring the accusation in different language. Yet the same feeling, the same strong and contemptuous conviction, pervades the whole school. What they reject and assail is, in two words, knowledge based on authority, and knowledge wanting an inductive basis.

That the utterances of great and famous philosophers are to be taken as truth; that in science as in the civil law, the *responsa prudentum* have a binding force; has been accepted in some departments of knowledge up to the present day. Long after the authority of Aristotle had been shaken new thinkers were allowed to occupy a similar place in some branches, and from Descartes to Hegel a

sort of monarchical rule has prevailed in metaphysics. The scientific school tolerates nothing of this kind. Not that it refuses to reverence superior minds, not perhaps that it is altogether incapable of yielding to the temptation of trusting a particular authority for a while too much, or following a temporary fashion. But as a general rule it rejects as a superstition the notion that the most superior mind is at all infallible; it dissents without scruple from those whom it reverences most; and on the other the most eminent members of it encourage this freedom, are well pleased to be contradicted, and avoid assuming an oracular style as a mark of charlatanry. Such a *coup d'état* in philosophy as that of Auguste Comte is resolutely resisted, and the autocracy of Hegel comes to an end, not by the accession of a new monarch, but rather by the proclamation of a republic in German philosophy.

By the introduction of this new principle, a large proportion of the doctrine current in the world is branded with the mark of spuriousness. In theology, metaphysics, moral philosophy, history, politics, the principle of authority has reigned hitherto with more or less exclusiveness. The repudiation of it is a revolution in those departments of knowledge. It converts whole libraries into waste-paper, silences controversies that have raged for ages, reduces to worthlessness the whole store of learning hived up in many capacious memories. It throws discredit at the same time upon the very name of erudition; not as such, for there is a kind of erudition much appreciated by the scientific school; but because erudition, as hitherto understood, has commonly gone along with, has in a great degree grown out of, an excessive reverence for the opinions of famous men. All that part of erudition, in particular, which is to knowledge what relic-worship is to religion, the laborious collection of minute facts that concern illustrious men, begins to seem superstitious and childish, when the general estimate of human wisdom so decidedly sinks.

But the more important change is in the extension of the Baconian method to

the whole domain of philosophy. While one part of the "wisdom of the world" has been discredited as resting solely on authority, another large division of it is now rejected as resting on inductions insufficient or untrustworthy, and another as resting on groundless assumptions, disguised under the name of necessary truths, truths of the reason, truths given in consciousness, etc. The long habit of trying experiments, the vast experience which has been gained of the mistakes which may be made about matters of fact, and of the infinite carelessness of the unscientific mind, has exposed to doubt whatever has been deduced in past ages from facts not recurrent or capable of being reproduced at will. The steady progress of discovery in the experimental sciences has stood out in contrast with the oscillating and unprogressive character of the sciences of mind. Moreover, in their process of extension, the experimental sciences have constantly trenched on the domain which was supposed to lie definitively beyond their limit. Physiology has brought us close to mind, and the old distinction between matter and spirit begins to be slighted as a superstition. The old psychology also is assailed as not properly based on physiology. Moral philosophy does not escape. It, as well as the philosophy of law, has suffered through the influx of new knowledge about remote races of men. Duties and rights, which once appeared axiomatic, and inseparable from human nature, now appear the artificial products of special conditions. The very notion of duty itself is represented as such an artificial product.

All these new ideas gathering upon our minds produce a scepticism with regard to current philosophy which extends much further than the particular beliefs with which they seem to conflict. We have grown so accustomed to find so-called incontrovertible axioms resolve themselves into inveterate prejudices, that we have grown shy of all those facile generalities which captivated former ages. Those current abstractions, which make up all the morality and all the philosophy of most people, have become suspicious and dangerous to us. Mind and matter, duties and rights, morality and expediency, honour and interest, virtue and vice, all these words, which seemed once to express elementary and certain realities, now strike us as just the words which, thrown into the scientific crucible, might dissolve at once. It is thus not

merely philosophy which is discredited, but just that homely and popular wisdom by which common life is guided. This too, it appears, instead of being the sterling product of plain experience, is the overflow of a spurious philosophy, the redundancy of the uncontrolled speculations of thinkers who were unacquainted with scientific method.

This second change leads to self-distrust, as the first led to distrust of other men. As we learn not to take our truth at second hand from other thinkers, so we learn that we must not take it, if the expression may be used, from ourselves. Truth is not what *we* think, any more than it is what famous men have thought. That which irresistibly strikes us as true, that which seems self-evident, that which commends itself to us, may nevertheless, we learn, not be true at all. It is not enough to judge for ourselves, to examine the facts independently. We must examine the facts according to a rigorous method, which has been elaborated by a long series of investigators, and without which neither candour nor impartiality would save us either from seeing wrong, or from receiving unsound evidence, or from generalizing too fast, or from allowing some delusive name to come between us and the reality. Distrust of others, distrust of ourselves — if the first of these two factors of the scientific spirit were separated from the second, the result would be mere self-conceit, mere irreverence. As it is, the scientific spirit is simply a jealous watchfulness against that tendency of human nature to read itself into the universe, which will show itself both in each individual and in the very greatest investigators, and which can only be controlled by rigorously adhering to a fixed process, and rigidly verifying the work of others by the same.

Knowledge, not scientifically obtained and verified, might very fitly be called by the name which Christianity uses. It might be called "human knowledge," or "the wisdom of the world." For the difference between it and genuine knowledge is just this, that it is adulterated by a human element. It is not the result of a contact between the universe and the naked human intelligence. The perceiving mind has mixed itself up with the thing perceived, and not merely in the way in which it always must, in the way which constitutes cognition, but in quite other and arbitrary ways, by wishes, by prejudices, by crochets, by vanities. Such humanized views of the universe

have a peculiar though cheap attractiveness. They naturally please the human mind, because, in fact, they were expressly contrived to do so. They adapt themselves readily to rhetoric and poetry, because, in fact, they *are* rhetoric and poetry in disguise. To reject them is to mortify human nature; it is an act of vigorous asceticism. It is to renounce the world as truly as the Christian does when he protests against fashionable vices. It is to reject a pleasant thing on the ground that it is insincere; that it is not in fact what it professes to be. The moral attitude of the man who does it is just such as Hebrew prophets assumed towards the flattering and lying court-prophets of their day; just such as Christianity itself assumed towards Pharisaism; just such as Luther and Knox assumed towards mediævalism; just such as the Puritans assumed towards prelacy. It is an attitude of indignant sincerity, an attitude marking an inward determination to face the truth of the universe, however disagreeable, and not to allow it to be adulterated and drugged, so as to suit our human feebleness. If we cannot produce from the authoritative documents of religion texts directly sanctioning it, this is because the particular problem was not presented in ancient times to the nation which gave us our religion. Those documents are full of passages expressing in poetic forms and in language suited to another age the spirit of modern science. Notably, the book of Job, not in occasional passages only, but as its main object and drift, contrasts the conventional, and, as it were, orthodox view of the universe, with the view which those obtain who are prepared to face its awfulness directly.

Thus the religious view and the scientific view of the universe, which are thought to be so opposite, agree in this important point. Both protest earnestly against human wisdom. Both wait for a message which is to come to them from without. Religion says, "Let man be silent, and listen when God speaks." Science says, "Let us interrogate nature, and let us be sure that the answer we get is really nature's, and not merely an echo of our own voice." Now whether or not religion and science agree in what they recommend, it is evident that they agree in what they denounce. They agree in denouncing that pride of the human intellect which supposes it knows everything, which is not passive enough in the presence of reality, but deceives itself

with pompous words instead of things, and with flattering eloquence instead of sober truth.

Here, however, it will be said, the agreement between religion and science ends, and even this agreement is only apparent. Science protests against the idols or delusions of the human intellect in order that it may substitute for them the reality of nature; religion sacrifices all those idols to the greatest of them all, which is God. For what is God—so the argument runs—but a hypothesis, which religious men have mistaken for a demonstrated reality? And is it not precisely against such premature hypotheses that science most strenuously protests? That a personal will is the cause of the universe—this might stand very well as a hypothesis to work with, until facts should either confirm it, or force it to give way to another either different or at least modified. That this personal will is benevolent, and is shown to be so by the facts of the universe, which evince a providential care for man and other animals—this is just one of those plausibilities, which passed muster before scientific method was understood—but modern science rejects it as unproved. Modern science holds that there may be design in the universe, but that to penetrate the design is, and probably always will be, beyond the power of the human understanding. That this personal will has on particular occasions revealed itself by breaking through the customary order of the universe, and performing what are called miracles—this is one of those legends of which histories were full, until a stricter view of evidence was introduced, and the modern critical spirit sifted thoroughly the annals of the world. But if modern science be right in these opinions, the very notion of God is removed altogether from the domain of practical life. So long as God appeared certainly to exist, He necessarily eclipsed and reduced to insignificance all other existences. So long as it was held possible to discover His will and mind, all other inquiries might reasonably be pronounced frivolous. But all is changed as soon as we begin to regard His existence as a mere hypothesis, and His will as inscrutable and beyond the reach of the human understanding. Not only is all changed, but all is reversed. Instead of being the one important question, God's will now becomes the one ~~un~~important question, because the one question which it is essentially impossi-

ble to answer. Whereas before we might charge men with frivolity who neglected this inquiry for inquiries the most important in themselves, now we may pronounce the shallowest dilettante, the most laboriously idle antiquary, a solid and sensible man, compared to the theologian. They pursue, to be sure, very minute objects, but they do or may attain them; the theologian attempts an impossibility—he is like the child who tries to reach the beginning of the rainbow.

It would appear, then, that that which I have called "human wisdom," and which is the butt at the same time of theology and science, is so because it is a kind of middle party between two mortally hostile factions. It is like the Girondins between the royalists and the Jacobins; both may oppose, and may even in a particular case combine to oppose it, and yet on that account they may not have the smallest sympathy with each other. And the middle party once crushed, there will follow no reconciliation, but a mortal contest between the extremes. Is this so or is it otherwise? The question is whether the statement given above of the theological view of the universe is exhaustive or not. Is it all summed up in the three propositions that a personal will is the cause of the universe, that that will is perfectly benevolent, that that will has sometimes interfered by miracles with the order of the universe? If these propositions exhaust it, and science throws discredit upon all of them, evidently theology and science are irreconcilable, and the contest between them must end in the destruction of one or the other.

It may be remarked, in the first place, that these propositions are not so much an abstract of theology as of the particular theology now current. That God is perfectly benevolent is a maxim of popular Christianity, and it may be found stated in the Bible. But it is not necessary to theology as such. Many nations have believed in gods of mixed or positively malignant character. Other nations have indeed ascribed to their deities all the admirable qualities they could conceive, but benevolence was not one of these. They have believed in gods that were beautiful, powerful, immortal, happy, but not benevolent. It may even be said that the Bible and Christianity itself have not uniformly represented God as perfectly benevolent. In the Old Testament He is described as just, but at the

same time terrible and pitiless against the wicked; and at least one form of modern Christianity, Calvinism, takes a view of the divine character which it is impossible to reconcile with infinite benevolence. Moreover, if almost all theologies have introduced what we should describe as miracle, yet it would be very incorrect to class many of them in this respect with that current view of Christianity, which represents God as demonstrating His existence by occasional interruptions of the order, otherwise invariable, of nature. Probably, in the majority of theologies, no other law of nature, except the will of God, is recognized; miracle when it is introduced is not regarded as breaking through any order; the very notion conveyed by the word supernatural is unacknowledged; miraculous occurrences are not distinguished from ordinary ones, except as being rarer, and are not distinguished from rare occurrences at all. To an ancient Jew probably an earthquake and the staying of the sun on Gibeon were occurrences of precisely the same character, and not distinguished as they are in our minds, the one as rare but natural, the other as supernatural and miraculous. All that was miraculous might have been removed from the creed of an ancient Jew without shaking his theology. Two out of the three propositions then are not necessary to the theological view of the universe. But surely the third is. Surely all theology implies that a personal will is the cause of the universe. I cannot admit even this. In the first place it is a very shallow view of theologies which represents them as having in all cases sprung from speculation about causes. Undoubtedly we can trace this speculation in our own religion. The phenomena of the world are accounted for very manifestly in the book of Genesis by the fiat of a personal will. But this is not at all an invariable character of theology. The deity of a thing is often regarded in theologies not at all as the cause of it, but in quite another way, perhaps I might say as the *unity* of it. No one has ever supposed that the Greeks regarded Poseidon as the *cause* of the sea. Athena seems to have been suggested to them by the sky, but she is not the *cause* of the sky. And it would be easy to conceive a theology which did not occupy itself at all with causes, but which at the same time conceived the separate phenomena of the universe, or the universe itself altogether *personally*.

May we then alter the proposition thus — instead of saying, "It is characteristic of the theological view of the universe to suppose a personal will or wills to be the cause of all phenomena," may we say, "Theology invariably conceives the universe under the form of personality, a personal will being assumed as either the cause or the law of phenomena"? Even this would be to go too far. Personality is only known to us as belonging to human beings. Personality is properly the abstraction of the qualities common to man, woman, and child. Of these one of the principal is what we call the will. Now the utmost that can be said is, that theology has asserted an analogy more or less strong between the phenomena of nature and human beings. Personality entire has never been attributed in any theology to deities. Personality, as we know it, involves mortality. Deities are always supposed immortal. Personality involves a body. The highest theologies have declared God to be incorporeal. We are brought back, then, to the will. Theologies attribute to deities a *will* like that of human beings. They do so; but again the highest theologies assert that the divine will is high above the human; that there is "no searching" of it; "that as the heaven is high above the earth, so are His ways than our ways, and His thoughts than our thoughts."

If the possibility of miracles be entirely given up, and the order of nature decided to be as invariable as science inclines to consider it; if all the appearances of benevolent design in the universe were explained away, it might be true that the belief in God would cease to be consoling. Instead of being a spring of life and activity, it might — I am not now saying it would — become a depressing and overwhelming influence. And this, no doubt, is what people mean when they identify, as they commonly do, the belief in God with belief in an overruling benevolence and in the supernatural. They mean to say not exactly that the belief in God *is* necessarily this, but that to be in any way useful or beneficial it must necessarily be this. But for my present purpose it is important to distinguish between the God in whom ordinary people at the present day believe and a God of another character in whom they might conceivably believe. I desire to insist upon the point that when science speaks of God as a myth or a hypothesis, and declares the existence of God to be doubtful and destined always

to remain doubtful, it is speaking of a particular conception of God, of God conceived as benevolent, as outside of nature, as personal, as the cause of phenomena. Do these attributes of benevolence, personality, etc., exhaust the idea of God? Are they — not merely the most important, the most consoling of His attributes, but — the only ones? By denying them do we cease not merely to be orthodox Christians but to be theists?

Science opposes to God nature. When it denies God it denies the existence of any power beyond or superior to nature; and it may deny at the same time anything like a *cause* of nature. It believes in certain laws of co-existence and sequence in phenomena, and in denying God it means to deny that anything further can be known. God and nature then express ideas which are different in an important particular. But it is evident enough that these ideas are not the opposites that controversy would represent them to be. On the contrary, they coincide up to a certain point. Those who believe in nature may deny God, but those who believe in God, believe, as a matter of course, in nature also. The belief in God includes the belief in nature, as the whole includes the part. Science would represent theology as disregarding nature, as passing over those laws which govern the universe, and occupying itself solely with occasional suspensions of them, or with ulterior, inscrutable causes. But this account of theology is derived from a partial view of it. It is practically to some extent true of the theologies of recent times, which have been driven out of the domain of nature by the rival and victorious method of physical science. But it is not true at all of the older theologies. They occupied themselves quite as much with laws as with causes; so far from being opposed to science, they were in fact themselves science in a rudimentary form; so far from neglecting the natural for the supernatural, they recognized no such distinction. The true object of theology at the beginning was to throw light upon natural laws; it used no doubt a crude method, and in some cases it attempted problems which modern science calls insoluble. Then, when a new method was introduced, theology stuck obstinately to its old one, and when the new method proved itself successful, theology gradually withdrew into those domains, where as yet the old method was not threatened, and might still reign

without opposition. Thus it began to be supposed that law belonged to science, and suspension of law or miracle to theology; that the one was concerned with nature, and the other with that which was above nature. Gradually the name of God began to be associated with the supernatural, and scientific men began to say they had nothing to do with God, and theologians to find something alien to them in the word nature.

Yet theology can never go further than this in repudiating nature. It can never deny that nature is an ordinance of God; it can never question that the laws of nature are laws of God. It may indeed treat them as of secondary importance; it may consider that they reveal God in an aspect in which it is not most important that we should know Him. But it cannot and does not deny that nature too is a revelation of God; it ought not to deny that natural philosophy is a part of theology, that there is a theology which may be called natural, and which does not consist in a collection of the evidences of benevolent design in the universe, but in a true deduction of the laws which govern the universe, whatever those laws may be, and whatever they may seem to indicate concerning the character of God.

But if, on the one hand, the study of nature be one part of the study of God, is it not true, on the other, that he who believes only in nature is a theist, and has a theology? Men slide easily from the most momentous controversies into the most contemptible logomachies. If we will look at things, and not merely at words, we shall soon see that the scientific man has a theology and a God, a most impressive theology, a most awful and glorious God. I say that man believes in a God who feels himself in the presence of a power apart from and immeasurably above his own, a power in the contemplation of which he is absorbed, in the knowledge of which he finds safety and happiness. And such now is nature to the scientific man. I do not now say that it is good or satisfying to worship such a God, but I say that no class of men since the world began have ever more truly believed in a God, or more ardently, or with more conviction, worshipped him. Comparing their religion in its fresh youth to the present confused forms of Christianity, I think a bystander would say that though Christianity had in it something far higher and deeper and more ennobling, yet the average scientific man worships just at present a more awful, and, as it were, a

greater deity than the average Christian. In so many Christians the idea of God has been degraded by childish and little-minded teaching; the Eternal and the Infinite and the All-embracing has been represented as the head of the clerical interest, as a sort of clergyman, as a sort of schoolmaster, as a sort of philanthropist. But the scientific man *knows* Him to be eternal; in astronomy, in geology, he becomes familiar with the countless millenniums of His lifetime. The scientific man strains his mind actually to realize God's infinity. In the fixed stars he traces Him, "distance inexpressible by numbers that have name." Meanwhile, to the theologian, infinity and eternity are very much of empty words when applied to the object of his worship. He does not realize them in actual facts and definite computations.

But it is not merely because he realizes a stupendous power that I call the scientific man a theist. A true theist ought to recognize his deity as giving him the law to which his life ought to be conformed. Now here it is that the resemblance of modern science to theology comes out most manifestly. There is no stronger conviction in this age than the conviction of the scientific man, that all happiness depends upon the knowledge of the laws of nature, and the careful adaptation of human life to them. Of this I have spoken before. Luther and Calvin were not more jealous of the church tradition that had obscured the true word of God in the Scriptures than the modern man of science is of the metaphysics and conventional philosophy that beguiled men away from nature and her laws. They want to remodel all education, all preaching, so that the laws of nature may become known to every man, and that every one may be in a condition to find his happiness in obeying them. They chafe at the notion of men studying anything else. They behave towards those who do not know nature with the same sort of impatient insolence with which a Christian behaved towards the worshippers of the emperor or a Mohammedan towards idolaters. As I sympathize very partially with the Mohammedan, and not quite perfectly with the early Christian, so I find the modern scientific zeal narrow and fanatical; but I recognize that it is zeal of the same kind as theirs—that is, that, like theirs, it is theological.

An infinite power will inspire awe and an anxious desire to obey its laws on the part of those who feel themselves depend-

ent on it. But such awe and fear, it may be said, do not constitute worship; worship implies admiration, and something which may be called love. Now it is true that the scientific man cannot feel for nature such love as a pious mind may feel for the God of Christians. The highest love is inspired by love, or by justice and goodness, and of these qualities science as yet discerns little or nothing in nature. But a very genuine love, though of a lower kind, is felt by the contemplator of nature. Nature, if not morally good, is infinitely interesting, infinitely beautiful. He who studies it has continually the exquisite pleasure of discerning or half-discerning and divining *laws*; regularities glimmer through an appearance of confusion; analogies between phenomena of a different order suggest themselves and set the imagination in motion; the mind is haunted with the sense of a vast unity not yet discoverable or namable. There is food for contemplation which never runs short; you are gazing at an object which is always growing clearer, and yet always, in the very act of growing clearer, presenting new mysteries. And this arresting and absorbing spectacle, so fascinating by its variety, is at the same time overwhelming by its greatness; so that those who have devoted their lives to the contemplation scarcely ever fail to testify to the endless delight it gives them, and also to the overpowering awe with which from time to time it surprises them.

There is one more feeling which a worshipper should have for his deity, a sense of personal connection, and, as it were, relationship. The last verse of a hymn of praise is very appropriately this — "For this God is *our* God forever and ever; He will be our guide even unto death." This feeling, too, the worshipper of nature has. He cannot separate himself from that which he contemplates. Though he has the power of gazing upon it as something outside himself, yet he knows himself to be a part of it. The same laws whose operations he watches in the universe he may study in his own body. Heat and light and gravitation govern himself as they govern plants and heavenly bodies. "In Him," may the worshipper of this deity say with intimate conviction, "in Him we live and move and have our being." When men whose minds are possessed with a thought like this, and whose lives are devoted to such a contemplation, say, "As for God, we know nothing of Him; science knows nothing of Him;

it is a name belonging to an extinct system of philosophy;" I think they are playing with words. By what name they call the object of their contemplation is in itself a matter of little importance. Whether they say God, or prefer to say nature, the important thing is that their minds are filled with the sense of a power to all appearance infinite and eternal, a power to which their own being is inseparably connected, in the knowledge of whose ways alone is safety and well-being, in the contemplation of which they find a beatific vision.

Well! this God is also the God of Christians. That the God of Christians is something more does not affect this fact. Nature, according to all systems of Christian theology, is God's ordinance. Whether with science you stop short at nature, or with theology believe in a God who is the author of nature, in either case nature is divine, for it is either God or the work of God. This whole domain is common to science and theology. When theology says, "Let us give up the wisdom of men and listen to the voice of God," and when science says, "Let us give up human authority and hollow *a priori* knowledge and listen to nature," they are agreed to the whole extent of the narrower proposition, *i.e.*, theology ought to admit all that science says, though science admits only a part of what theology says. Theology cannot say the laws of nature are not divine; all it can say is, they are not the most important of the divine laws. Perhaps not, but they gain an importance from the fact that they are laws upon which all can agree. Making the largest allowance for discoveries, about which science may be too confident, there remains a vast mass of natural knowledge which no one questions. This to the Christian is so much knowledge about God, and he ought to rejoice quite as much as the man of science at the rigorous method by which it has been separated from the human prejudice and hasty ingenuity, and delusive rhetoric or poetry, which might have adulterated it. By this means we have been enabled to hear a voice which is unmistakably God's. And if it seems to be God speaking about matters not of the greatest importance, still perhaps it may be as well to listen. So much, at least, reverence seems to dictate; and if it did not, the urgent necessity for more agreement on fundamental questions would dictate it imperiously.

II.

I HAVE suggested the thought of a God revealed in nature, not by any means because such a view of God seems to me satisfactory, or worthy to replace the Christian view, or even as a commencement from which we must rise by logical necessity to the Christian view. I have suggested it because this is the God whom the present age actually does, and, in spite of all opposition, certainly will worship, also because this aspect of God is common to all theologies, however much in some it may be slighted or depreciated, and lastly, because I do not believe that any theology can be real or satisfying that does not make it prominent as well as admit it. I can conceive no religion as satisfactory that falls short of Christianity, but, on the other hand, I cannot believe any religion to be healthy that does not start from nature-worship. It is in the free and instinctive admiration of human beings for the glory of heaven, earth and sea, that religion begins, and I cannot imagine but as morbid a religion which has ceased to admire them.

But many readers will probably think that not much is to be hoped from dwelling on this subject. "We know very well that the universe is glorious, but when you have said that, there is an end of the matter. We want to make atheists believe in God, and you do it not by changing their minds, but by changing the meaning of the word God. It is not a verbal controversy that rages between atheists and Christians, but a controversy that concerns the most serious realities. When people display such rancour against religion as was shown by the Paris Commune, you may be sure there is some essential matter in dispute, and that nothing is more vain than to attempt to reconcile them by refining upon words. According to the definition you have given of theism, no rational being could ever be an atheist."

I will endeavour to answer this supposed objection at length, and the part of it which sounds the most formidable will give me the least trouble. That people do not shoot and stab each other for a word is not always true. In fact, when the word is theological that is just what people do. It has often been remarked of theological controversies, that they are never conducted more bitterly than when the difference between the rival doctrines is very small. This is

nearly correct, but not quite. If you want to see the true white heat of controversial passion, if you want to see men fling away the very thought of reconciliation, and close in internecine conflict, you should look at controversialists who *do not differ at all*, but who have adopted different words to express the same opinion.

But the other question raised in the objection, the question whether there can be such a thing as atheism, will furnish me with a convenient point from which I may start for a fuller explanation of what I mean by the worship of God in nature. As I have represented modern science as a form of theism, and as there is no rational man who does not believe—at least, in a general way—in science, it follows of course that no sensible man in these times can be speculatively an atheist. And I believe no one can, however many great philosophers may have congratulated themselves upon accomplishing that feat. If, then, no man could be an atheist practically without being one speculatively also, it would be true that men are entirely mistaken in the importance they attach to the distinction between theist and so-called atheist. It would then appear to be a mis-described distinction, and to be in reality only a distinction between two kinds of theists. This is what in common controversy it actually is. One might suppose beforehand that the theist and atheist must necessarily have the whole diameter between them, that their thoughts upon all subjects must be affected by this fundamental difference. It is not so in fact; the theist and the so-called atheist often indeed differ very widely, but sometimes also they think very much alike. This is, in reality, because one or other has been misnamed, for between a real and thoroughly convinced theist and an atheist really deserving that name, there is almost as much difference as we could expect; only the latter character is not very easy to meet with.

An atheist in the proper sense of the word is not a man who disbelieves in the goodness of God, or in His distinctness from nature, or in His personality. These disbeliefs may be as serious in their way as atheism, but they are different. Atheism is a disbelief in the existence of God—that is, a disbelief in *any* regularity in the universe to which a man must conform himself under penalties. Such a disbelief, as I have said, is speculatively monstrous, but it may exist

practically, and where it does is an evil as fatal to character and virtue as the most timid religionist supposes. We may consider here briefly some of the forms which atheism assumes.

The purest form of atheism might be called by the general name of *wilfulness*. All human activity is a transaction with nature. It is the arrangement of a compromise between what we want on the one hand, and what nature has decreed on the other. Something of our own wishes we have almost always to give up; but by carefully considering the power outside ourselves, the necessity that conditions all our actions, we may make better terms than we could otherwise, and reduce to a minimum what we are obliged to renounce. Now we may either underrate or overrate the force of our own wills. The first is the extravagance of theism; it is that fatalism which steals so naturally upon those who have dwelt much upon the thought of God, which is said to paralyze, for example, the whole soul of the Mussulman. But the opposite mistake is a deficiency of theism; a touch of it often marks the hero, but the fulness of it is that kind of blind infatuation which poets have represented under the image of the giants that tried to storm heaven. Not to recognize anything but your own will, to fancy everything within your reach if you only will strongly enough, to acknowledge no superior power outside yourself which must be considered and in some way propitiated if you would succeed in any undertaking; this is complete wilfulness, or, in other words, pure atheism. It may also be called childishness, for the child naturally discovers the force within it sooner than the resisting necessity outside. Not without a few falls in the wrestle with nature do we learn the limits of our own power and the pitiless immensity of the power that is not ours. But there are many who cannot learn this lesson even from experience, who forget every defeat they suffer, and always refuse to see any power in the universe but their own wills. Sometimes, indeed, they discover their mistake too late. Many barbarous races are in this condition. In their childishness they have engaged themselves in a direct conflict with nature. Instead of negotiating with her, they have declared a blind war. They have adopted habits which they gradually discover to be leading them to destruction; but they discover it too late and when they are too deeply

compromised. Then we see the despair of the atheistic nation, and its wild struggles as it feels itself caught in the whirlpool; then, a little later, we find that no such nation exists, and on the map its seat begins to be covered with names belonging to another language. Less extreme and unredeemed, the same Titanism may sometimes be remarked in races called civilized. Races might be named that are undergoing punishments little less severe for this insensate atheism. "*Sedet aeternumque sedebit*," that unhappy Poland, not indeed extinguished but partitioned, and every thirty years decimated anew. She expiates the crime of atheistic wilfulness, the fatal pleasure of unbounded individual liberty, which rose up against the very nature of things. And other nations we know that expect all successes from the mere blind fury of willing, that declare the word impossible unknown to their language. They colour their infatuation sometimes with the name of self-sacrifice, and fancy they can change the divine law by offering up themselves as victims to their own vanity; they "fling themselves against the bars of fate;" they die in theatrical attitudes, and little know how "the abyss is wreathed in scorn" of such cheap martyrdom.

A wrong belief about God, however fatal it may be, is not atheism. Mr. Buckle tried to show that the Spanish empire fell through a false conception of the order of the universe; and it seems clear that the rigid Catholic view of the world is dangerous in this age to every nation that adopts it. These are the effects of false theology. But there is a state of mind which, though very far removed from the wilfulness I have been describing, and often accompanied with a strong and anxious religiousness, may nevertheless be practically regarded as a form of atheism. It is the state of those minds which, fully believing in an order of the universe, yet have such a poor and paltry conception of it that they might almost as well have none at all.

People are sometimes led to this by a very reasonable and excusable process of thought. Naturally modest and distrustful of their own powers, they despair of understanding the order of the universe; they think it almost presumptuous to attempt to understand it. Wisely distrustful of any knowledge that is not precise, they avert their eyes instinctively from everything which cannot be made the subject of such knowledge. In all their

transactions with nature, to use my former phrase, they make it a rule to be unambitious. They aim at objects very definite and very near. Whatever they gain they make it a rule not to expose to any further risk. They avoid, as it were, meeting the universe in front, and endeavour to overcome it in detail. For its immediate purpose this plan is the best that can be pursued. If in all our actions we allowed ourselves to remember the greatness of the power with which we have to do, we should accomplish nothing; if because nature's laws are large and comprehensive, we never acted except on the largest principles, we should either fall a prey to unsound generalizations, the more ruinous because of their grandeur, or we should become paralyzed with a Turkish fatalism. Far better, no doubt, it is to make the utmost use of what precise knowledge we have, however little may be the amount of it, and not to suffer our minds to be bewildered by coping too freely with an adversary whose play is beyond us. It is these humble, cautiously inductive people that prosper most in the world up to a certain point. To them belong the large populations, the thriving communities, the stable politics. They never dream of defying nature; they win an endless series of small victories over her.

There is no reason why this cautiousness should necessarily degenerate into little-mindedness. It does not take its beginning in any deficiency in the feeling for what is great. On the contrary, it is the direct result of an overwhelming sense of the greatness, and, so to speak, the dangerousness of nature. Those who proceed thus warily, probing nature as they go, may with most reason expect to penetrate far and to elevate their minds gradually until they can venture to cope with the grandeur of the world and become familiar with great ideas. And when this is done they will have escaped the danger of atheism. Their minds will become the mirror of an Infinite Being, and their whole natures will be conformed to His. But in the earlier stages of such a process the temptation to a kind of atheism is strong. From the habit of leaving out of account all larger considerations in every problem, on the ground that they are vague and not precisely calculable, they are led easily to forget the very existence of such considerations. In some cases this habit even leads to great practical miscalculations.

It is evidently a mistaken algebra to assume that all unknown quantities = 0; yet this mistake is constantly made by the practical men I am describing. When vague considerations are suggested to them, instead of assigning them an approximate value which, since they cannot get the true value is evidently what they ought to do, they leave them out of account altogether, though an indeterminate value may just as easily be large as small. But it is not with these practical mistakes that I am now concerned; practically these men are more often right than wrong, though in the exceptional cases, when everything turns on a great principle, they fail deplorably. But the habit of never suffering the mind to dwell on anything great produces often an atheism of the most pitiable and helpless kind. The soul of man lives upon the contemplation of laws or principles; it is made to be constantly assimilating such sustenance from the universe; this is its food; *not by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God doth man live.* What then must be the moral starvation of the man who, from an excess of caution, turns away from everything of the kind, until from want of habit he can no longer see such things; and forgets their very existence; so that for him there is no longer any glory in the universe? For all beauty or glory is but the presence of law; and the universe to him has ceased to be a scene of law and has become an infinite litter of detail, a rubbish-heap of confused particulars, a mere worry and weariness to the imagination. I have been describing the Philistine, the miserable slave of details, who worships a humiliated, dissected and abject deity, a mere Dagon, "fallen flat upon the groundseledge, and shaming his worshippers."

There is a particular form of conventionalism which all men who see it instinctively call by the name of atheism. By conventionalism generally, I understand the mistaking of institutions, usages, forms of society, which essentially are temporary and transitory for normal and permanent forms. It is conventionalism, for example, when hereditary royalty or aristocracy are supposed to be not merely good institutions in particular cases but necessary in all countries and times. There is nothing at all atheistic in such a mistake; it is rather a superstition—that is, it is a false belief, but still a belief. The tem-

porary arrangements are honestly confused with eternal laws, the feelings and views which in course of time have grown up around them are honestly mistaken for essential morality. The devoted adherents of the exiled Stuarts and Bourbons, the early Jesuits and the other champions of the counter-reformation, seem to me to have been such conventionalists. I think they confounded a transitory state of things with the sacred and eternal laws of human society. But for a long time their faith was genuine though mistaken. They had a God, and therefore they had vigour, and occasionally victory. But at the same time their belief was an ebbing tide. The movement of the age was, on the whole, against it; their successes always bore the marks of being accidental, and were followed in no long time by more than equivalent reverses. They could never give a character of reality to what they created; they could seldom feel quite easy and happy in their party-strife. Their eloquence was copious and sonorous, but not often quite natural, and seldom convincing or overwhelming. And with such conventionalists, when the age puts them on their defence, these misgivings, this uneasiness, this constraint and depression go on increasing. Doubt penetrates them in spite of all their resistance, in spite of all the chivalrous devotion to their cause upon which they pride themselves. In the ardour of conflict they have pushed into the foreground all the weakest parts of their creed, and have got into the habit of asserting most vehemently just what they doubt most, because it is what is most denied. As their own belief ebbs away from them they are precluded from learning a new one, because they are too deeply pledged, have promised too much, asseverated too much, and involved too many others with themselves. Thus their language becomes more and more vehement and hollow, more and more despairing under the mask of triumphant confidence. It may happen that the cause they defend is not merely unsound but terribly bad, that what they have taken for sacred institutions are in reality monstrous abuses. Then, as they become reluctantly enlightened, as their advocacy grows first a little forced, then by degrees consciously hypocritical, until in the end their eyes are fully opened not only to the fact that their cause is bad, but to all the enormous badness of it, there follows a complete moral dissolution of the whole man.

Unable to abandon a position he is bound to, forced to act belief and enthusiasm when under the mask there is the very opposite of both — settled disbelief and utter disapproval — the man sees now in the universe nothing but a chaos. At the beginning he had a God; his actions were regulated by a law which he recognized in the universe; but now he recognizes this law no more, and yet is forbidden by his situation from recognizing any other. The link that bound him to the universe is snapped; the motive that inspired his actions is gone, and his actions have become meaningless, mechanical, galvanic. He is an atheist, a man without a God because without a law. Such men may generally be noted among the most intelligent adherents of expiring causes, demoralized soldiers, powerless for good and capable of any mischief.

These are specimens of what seems to me to be properly called atheism. The common characteristic of all these states of mind is feebleness. In the first example you have violent feebleness, impotence; in the second, cautious feebleness; in the third, cynical feebleness; but in all cases feebleness springing from a conscious want of any clue to the order of the universe. The specimens I have selected are all such as may be furnished by men of great natural vigour. The cynical atheist has often an extreme subtlety of intellect, the Philistine commonly begins with a great grasp of reality, a great superiority to illusions; the wilful atheist has often much imagination and energy. Where a character wanting in energy is affected by atheism you have those *ἀνένηνα κίρηννα* of which the world is at all times full. By the side of the profound cynic you have the mere loungeur, who can take an interest in nothing, all whose thoughts are hearsays, never verified, never realized, not believed, not worthy of the name of prejudices — echoes of prejudices, imitations of hypocrisy. He moves about embarrassed and paralyzed by the hollowness of all he knows; conscious that nothing that he has in his mind would bear the smallest criticism or probation, knowing no way to anything better, and meanwhile ingeniously confessing his own inanity. By the side of the over-judicious Philistine, who has fallen into feebleness through an excessive dread of generalizing hastily, there may be seen the born Philistine, who does not know, and has never heard, what generalizing is, who becomes uncomfortable when he hears a principle

enunciated, as if he had been addressed by a foreigner in some language unknown to him, and whose homely talk never willingly travels beyond what time the train starts, and whether it happened on Monday or on Tuesday. Lastly, by the side of the brilliant Utopian, who overlooks the greatness of the necessity with which he has to contend, there is the Utopian without brilliancy, the *enragé*, the mere restless disturber.

As atheism is but another name for feebleness, so the universal characteristic of theology—if we put aside for the present the rare belief in an utterly hostile or thwarting deity—is energy. He who has a faith, we know well, is twice himself. The world, the conventional or temporary order of things, goes down before the weapons of faith, before the energy of those who have a glimpse, or only think they have a glimpse, of the eternal or normal order of things. And this vigour of theism does not much depend on the nature of the God in whom the theist believes. Just as atheism does not consist in a bad theory of the universe, but in the want of any theory, so theism consists not in possessing a meritorious or true or consoling theory, but simply in possessing a theory of the universe. He who has such a theory acts with confidence and decision, he who has no such theory is paralyzed. One of the rudest of all theories of the universe is that propounded by Mohammed, yet it raised up a feeble and dispersed nation to vigour, union, and empire. Calvinism presents assuredly a view of the universe which is not in any way consoling, yet this creed too gave vigour and heroism. The creed of the earliest Romans rested upon no basis which could for a moment pass for philosophical, yet while it was believed it gave order to the state, sanction to morality, victory to the armies. Whatever kind of theology be in question, so long as it is truly believed, the only danger is of its inspiring too much energy—of its absorbing its votaries too much, and driving them into extreme courses.

And so if the nature recognized by science be not benevolent, and have provided no future life for men, it does not follow that her votaries are not theologians, and it is quite clear that their theology gives them energy. Many theologies have had no future life—indeed it is well known that our own, in its earlier Judaic form, laid no stress upon any future life. And it is not the benevolence

of his deity which gives so much energy and confidence to the convinced theist; it is rather the assurance that he has the secret of propitiating his deity. It was not because Jupiter or Mars were benevolent beings that the Roman went out to battle confiding in their protection. It was because all sacrifices had been performed which the pontiffs or the sibylline books prescribed. Just of the same kind is the theistic vigour which we see in modern science. Science also has its *procuratio prodigiorum*. It does not believe that nature is benevolent, and yet it has all the confidence of Mohammedans or Crusaders. This is because it believes it understands the laws of nature, and knows how to deal so that nature shall favour its operations. Not by the sibylline books, but by experiment, not by supplications but by scientific precautions and operations it discovers and propitiates the mind of its deity.

But by the side of this scientific theology decrying theology there is also a popular outcry against theology. The revolution in Europe delights in declaring itself atheistic. The meaning of this in the main is that it wishes to express in the tersest possible way its hatred of the reigning theology. But with this feeling there is no doubt a mixture of that real atheism I have described above under the name of wilfulness. These revolutionists have so little conception of the greatness of the powers which determine the order of things, that they imagine they have only to make up their minds and to express their resolution with sufficient vehemence and to fling away their lives with sufficient recklessness, and human society will in a short time assume just the shape they wish. They think, in short, that they themselves are very great, and that nature is very little. Still, it is evident enough that their hatred against the reigning theology is not a merely capricious feeling. It is no wild egotistic grudge against whatever is powerful, however this feeling may occasionally blend with it. It is a serious, persistent, deep-rooted aversion. But it by no means follows that the reigning system excites their hatred purely as a theology, even though they themselves believe so. In their furious invectives against God, nothing is more evident than that they are thinking of a special conception of God, and though they themselves do not profess to substitute any other conception it is very possible they are unconsciously doing so. At any rate the mere

fact that these men are nominally atheists proves no more than is proved by the same name having been commonly bestowed upon the first Christians.

What then are the grounds of the irreconcilable repugnance of the revolution for theology? Nothing is more easy than to distinguish and enumerate the principal ones. First may be ranked the political ground, that is, the intimate connection in which they find theology standing to the political system they are labouring to overthrow. Twice in modern Europe it has been possible to discern the interdependence of the reigning political with the reigning theological system. Modern history is filled with two great movements, the Reformation and the Revolution. The first was an attempt to purify religion, the second an attempt to reform government and society. In both cases the principal obstacle to the movement was found in the coalition of the Church and government. The decided reaction against the Reformation which marks the second half of the sixteenth century, and which ended in restoring the mediæval form of Christianity in so many countries of Europe, seems to have been principally caused by the feeling of some courts, particularly the Imperial court, that they could not afford to forfeit the support of the great Catholic organization, and by the corresponding disposition in Catholicism to ally itself with governments. The principle of saving the Church by the help of governments was avowed—Ranke tells us—by Pope Pius IV., and it was by this means that Catholicism was restored upon a new and strengthened foundation at the Council of Trent. What the Church owed to the State for protection against the Reformation it repaid two centuries later in assistance against the revolution. A time had come round when the State was threatened as the Church had been, and now kings became faithful churchmen as the churchmen of Pius IV.'s school had before become faithful royalists. For half a century kings had coquetted with freethought, and freethought had flattered kings. But when the crisis came, and royalty was in danger, it hurried back to find shelter in the Church. Napoleon, Charles X., and the emperor Francis formed the new alliance by which theology was called in to drive out revolution in the State, just as Pius IV. formed the older alliance with royalty against reformation in the Church. The natural

effect of this coalition is to incline the revolution to attack the Church at the same time that it assails government. Atheism has become the creed of revolution because theology has been the traditional creed of monarchy and of privilege.

But is it true that theology is necessarily conservative or monarchical, because it happens to be true of the Christian Church, or the most prominent part of it, at this particular time? At particular times and places theology has been revolutionary. The earliest Christians must have seemed the most revolutionary party of the Greek and Roman world. Mohammedanism was so violently revolutionary that it completely transformed the Eastern world, and has caused almost the whole East to look back upon the ages preceding it as upon "times of ignorance." The same may be said of Buddhism in Asia. And certainly one form at least of Protestantism—I mean Puritanism—was revolutionary in spirit, and led either to an abridgment of royal power or to positive republicanism.

Hereditary royalty and aristocratic privilege were the institutions which in the last century the revolution attacked. It was historically in the names of scepticism and sometimes of atheism that the attack was conducted. But there was no reason at all in the nature of things why the same attack should not have been made in the name of theology. In France theology has been on the side of privilege, and equality has been associated with opposition to theology. But in Turkey the opposite has happened; the equality of mankind has been preached, and successfully, in the name of theology. If a Christian preacher had been inspired to do so, he might with perfect warrant from his religion have proclaimed equality in France. Indeed this was to some extent what actually happened. Rousseau spoke partly in the name of theology, and even of Christian theology; and it was not until the sceptical foundation had been in a manner abandoned, and an appeal made to religion, that the spirit of political change awoke.

Indeed to say that the revolution has charged upon theology itself what is merely the defect of a particular theology is a statement much short of the truth. The conservatism of the Church in the last ages is not principally due to the natural tendencies of the Christian religion. It is not so much Christianity as

the Church that has been conservative. Church and government have been drawn together not so much from any natural sympathy—witness their perpetual conflicts in the Middle Ages—as by a common danger. All that can be said is that in the hour of difficulty, when it was their obvious interest to combine, they have not found themselves so antipathetic that they could not do so. In neither of the two great crises was the help rendered by the one to the other disinterested. In the sixteenth century it was the Church that was threatened most; but governments were also uneasy, and took as well as gave in the arrangement they made with the Church. In the revolution the State struggled for life, but the distress of the Church was almost as great. In these circumstances they would be driven into alliance even in the absence of any natural affinity, and being once in alliance would excite the indiscriminate aversion of the revolution as if they had been natural allies. In one instance at least this has been strikingly realized. When the revolution attacked monarchy and privilege, it was not very surprising that they should attack Christianity at the same time. Christianity is entirely silent on the question of liberty, and lends no support to those who contend against despotism. It has been used to defend despotism, and not without plausibility. It is not quite the same with privilege. Christianity is clearly favourable on the whole to equality, and yet even here its declaration is not very distinct. But in due time the revolution, having conquered these enemies went on to attack new ones. Leaving behind it mediæval monarchy and aristocracy, it proclaimed war against plutocracy. It proclaimed the principle of fraternity, fraternity between individuals as opposed to reckless competition in industry, fraternity between nations as opposed to war. Now this new principle is not merely consistent with Christianity, to say this would be almost as absurd as to call it inconsistent with Christianity. It is neither more nor less than Christianity itself. Christianity is certainly not a socialistic system, because it is not, in that sense of the word, a system at all, but most assuredly Christianity furnished the ideas which the different socialistic systems are blundering attempts to realize. Not only so but I believe that Christianity as a morality actually did nothing else, and that the modern word fraternity coincides exactly with the moral side of Christian-

ity. And when fraternity was first put upon the order of the day in 1848, this fact was to some extent recognized. Christianity actually played a certain part in that revolution. But then followed a restoration of the old alliance between the Church and government. For twenty years they continued accomplices in reaction. The consequence has been that when revolution once more raises its head it is no longer able to see the identity of fraternity and Christianity, nay, absolutely identifies Christianity with the negation of fraternity. How far it is possible to falsify an institution was never known to mankind until in 1871 the Paris workmen assailed with irreconcilable fury the Church of Christ in the name of human brotherhood.

Thus the political repugnance of the revolution to theology is in part merely a repugnance to an institution which has falsified the theology of which it is the depository, and in any case is a repugnance not to theology as such, but merely to a particular theology. But the revolution has also, no doubt, a quarrel with theology as a doctrine. "Theology," it says, "even if not exactly opposed to social improvement, is a superstition, and as such allied to ignorance and conservatism. Granting that its precepts are good, it enforces them by legends and fictitious stories which can only influence the uneducated, and therefore in order to preserve its influence it must needs oppose education. Nor are these stories a mere excrescence of theology, but theology itself. For theology is neither more nor less than a doctrine of the supernatural. It proclaims a power behind nature which occasionally interferes with natural laws. It proclaims another world quite different from this in which we live, a world into which what is called the soul is believed to pass at death. It believes, in short, in a number of things which students of nature know nothing about and which science puts aside either with respect or with contempt." Now these supernatural doctrines are not merely a part of theology, still less separable from theology, but theology consists exclusively of them. Take away the supernatural person, miracles, and the spiritual world, you take away theology at the same time, and nothing is left but simple nature and simple science. Thus theology comes to be used in the sense of supernaturalism, and in this view also excites the hostility of the age. Not merely scientific men themselves, for of these

I am not now speaking, but liberals in general, all those who have any tincture of science, all whose minds have in any degree taken the scientific stamp, a vast number already, and, as education spreads, likely to become co-extensive with civilized mankind, form a habit of thought with which they are led to consider theology irreconcilable.

It is a singular coincidence which has combined in apparent opposition to theology the two mightiest forces of the present age. Truly it is not against flesh and blood that religion has to contend, but against principalities and powers, that is, against the revolution and against science. Hasty minds, poetic imaginations, ready theorists, will never be content to see a mere coincidence in this. They will not admit that theology has been undeservedly charged with all the sins of that ancient corporation called the Christian Church, with which sins in reality it had nothing whatever to do. It is much more convenient to imagine the Church as the body of which theology is the soul, and to trace all the body's actions to the natural disposition of the informing soul. By this easy process we arrive at the conclusion that theology is an essentially conservative and stagnant principle, with the strongest natural affinity for despotism, privilege, respectability, and every kind of antiquated pretension, that, in short, it is a way of viewing the universe which inevitably leads to all the vices peculiar to old endowed corporations. And that an institution which is opposed to the revolution should be at the same time at war with science will never be thought a mere coincidence. Party spirit will be adroit enough to make it out that science and revolution are as soul and body on the one side, as theology and conservatism are on the other; that people who believe in miracles must necessarily side with capital against labour, and that large standing armies follow logically from a belief in benevolent design.

As to the mistake which lies in confounding theology with supernaturalism, it is not necessary here to do more than repeat shortly what was said in the first chapter. First, then, there is no necessary connection between theology and supernaturalism. It is quite possible to believe in a God, and even a personal God, of whom nature is the complete and only manifestation. Supernaturalism is part of the reigning theology, but it is not any necessary part of theology,

as such. Secondly, when it is said that supernaturalism is *identical* with theology, this is not true at all even of the reigning theology, *i.e.*, of modern Christianity. Such a notion has sprung from a confusion of ideas. In the controversy between Christianity and science it has become usual for shortness to give the name of theology (meaning Christianity) to that part of theology which science controverts. This is a very usual and, if rightly understood, a very harmless controversial practice. The agreements between theology and science may very properly be overlooked by controversy which is only concerned with their differences. But it is the mistake constantly made by controversialists to adopt this abridged notation, as I might call it, outside the domain of controversy. For example, Catholicism means two quite different things according as the word is used in controversy or not. In controversy with Protestantism Catholicism means worship of the Virgin and the saints, transubstantiation, purgatory. But no mistake could be more monstrous than to suppose that if all these doctrines were removed Catholicism would disappear. On the contrary, by far the larger half would remain—worship of God, worship of Christ, heaven and hell, forgiveness of sins, the law of love. In the same way, in controversy with science Christianity (not theology) and supernaturalism are convertible terms. That is to say, if supernaturalism is refuted, science wins and Christianity loses in the particular controversy in which they are engaged. In the controversial sense this is the destruction of Christianity, but only in the controversial sense. For when the worship of God outside nature is taken away the worship of God in nature remains. Whether this residue is important or unimportant will be considered later; at any rate it is there; and we may say at once that it would not be surprising if it should turn out more considerable than controversialists believe, when we remember how habitual it is for controversialists to exaggerate their differences, and generally how prodigiously exaggerated is the common estimate of the province of debate and dispute in human affairs.

At any rate, it is evident that the theology of the book of Job, of many of the Psalms, *e.g.*, the 104th, of many passages of the prophets, of many discourses of Christ, of many passages in the Epistles, would remain unaffected if supernatural-

ism were entirely abandoned. I will say no more at this stage.

On the whole, then, when we look at the great controversy of the age, what do we see? It is said that a furious attack upon theology is being made by the two distinct though allied hosts of science and revolution. But we see something essentially different. We see that what is called science is indeed a most formidable power, against whomsoever she may declare war, but that her enemy is not theology, but supernaturalism, and that science herself has all the character of a theology, not comforting or elevating like that she opposes, but not less capable of inspiring zeal and subduing the mind with conviction, and bearing in her hand a budget of practical reforms; and moreover, that the deity of her devotion is not different, but only a too much disregarded aspect of the Deity of Christians. The host of revolution which we see approaching from another side is far less formidable. It is infuriated, but neither knows what it would overthrow nor what it would build. But we can see that its enemy is not theology at all, nor even supernaturalism, except in a secondary degree. It is enraged against an ancient corporation, which, having something mediæval in its constitution, like so many other corporations, has been led in the latest centuries to make common cause with other mediæval institutions which were endangered by the modern spirit. This corporation happens to be the depositary of a theology partly supernaturalistic, but we can see plainly that had it been the depositary of modern science itself it would have excited just the same animosity, nay, probably very much more, for in fact its creed in some aspects is in most remarkable agreement with the revolutionary creed itself.

The result, then, is this — of atheism, that demoralizing palsy of human nature, which consists in the inability to discern in the universe any law by which human life may be guided, there is in the present age less danger than ever, and it is daily made more and more impossible by science itself: of revolt against the Christian law of fraternity, there is also less than ever in this age, and that redemption of the poor and that pacification of nations which Christianity first suggested are more prominent than ever among the aspirations of mankind. On the other hand, the organization of the Church seems ill-adapted to the age, and seems to expose it to the greatest

danger; and, what is far more serious, the old elevating communion with God, which Christianity introduced, seems threatened by the new scientific theology, which while presenting to us deeper views than ever of His infinite and awful greatness, and more fascinating views than ever of His eternal beauty and glory, denies for the present to Him that human tenderness, justice, and benevolence which Christ taught us to see in Him.

From Temple Bar.

F'RONA!

WE had come down from the mountains. Only yesterday we had been up there, with our heads in the sky, so it seemed to us to-day, looking back on those heights, and we had seen the sun go down in solemn splendour, and the snow-tops flare up with sudden fires, peak behind peak, slowly revealing themselves like virgin daughters of a dying monarch gathering round his bedside; and then, by degrees, the sky had grown sharp, and clean, and cold, and blue as a glacier, and the old stars had come out, and a vain young moon as well, and gazed at themselves in the depths of the dark green lake, and we had buttoned up our coats as we paced the terrace, and by-and-by had gone in and feasted off chamois cutlets and Valtellina, after which we had betaken ourselves to the *salon* and talked . . .

We were a pleasant party about to break up, and there is always something rather melancholy about that. We talked of it, however, as English people generally do talk of such things, without the least trace of sentiment, laughing over past adventures, and making plans for future meetings.

"We must do the Sella Pass next year," said one of the ladies. Ladies usually are foremost in these proposals. "Mr. W—, at Pontresina, has been telling me all about it. You must sleep at the Roseg Inn, and start at two in the morning. It only takes fifteen hours if the snow is in good condition, and you have the most magnificent views in the world. Oh—and there is the Piz Campaccio—I can't bear going away and leaving that undone, Gus."

"Well, we did try that last year, you know," said Gus soothingly. "But that tiresome snowstorm caught us up, just as we got to the Bernina Pass. We had

some fun out of it, though, all the same. Don't you remember the snow-balls? and how we pelted a travelling-carriage that happened to be passing at the time —" And here Gus, who, I am almost ashamed to say, was a head-master (I will not name the school), rubbed his hands together in glee at the remembrance of the exploit.

"It was some Italian nobleman's carriage," said Gus's sister. "He had just married a young girl from one of these villages, and was taking her back to Italy with him. I remember her face — such a pretty, bright face; she put it up to one of the windows and laughed at the snow-balls —" And Miss Brooke went on talking in a pleasant, picturesque way which she had; but we none of us listened very much, I am afraid. We were tired, or dull, or sorry to part, or glad to part, and presently we all shook hands with each other, and before the next day's sun was fully awake, we were most of us scattered far and wide over the face of the mountains, like the handful of seeds the Venetian girl throws down to the pigeons in the Piazza San Marco.

The Brookes and I were not going to part quite at once. We were old friends, and had agreed to pursue our journey a little farther together. My acquaintance with the doctor, indeed, dated from a very early period, while he was only as yet under-master at a private school, and I just budding into all the glory of short jackets and tall hats. My acquaintance with his sister, who was considerably younger than "Gus," in fact, about the same age as I was myself, commenced at the same time. Our friendship had always been based on the broadest principles of enmity. At that early age she used to reproach me with a vulgar taste for "sucks," a propensity to dirty hands, and rough hair, and a low-bred preference for marbles over dolls. Now her taunts were chiefly levelled at my low, radical principles, my democratic tastes — (why didn't I marry a washerwoman's daughter, and make a shining example of myself?) — my want of enthusiastic admiration for the places she raved about — for Switzerland in general, for the Engadine in particular.

"But I do admire it hugely," I interposed meekly. "Only there is rather too much of it. Endless snow-peaks and pine forests, and metallic blue skies clear as crystal and equally cold, are all very well in their way, but I own to lik-

ing something less bleak to look at, something certainly more genial to feel, 'whenever I take my walks abroad' —"

"Yes, that is it," she retorted. "It is all too grand for you. You had better spend your next summer holidays at Margate."

If it had been somewhat cold the night before on the terrace at St. Moritz, we could hardly breathe the following morning at Chiavenna. A hot, dense, vapoury mist hung between us and the sky, through which the mountains loomed vaguely, grey and spectral. All yesterday we had come clambering down their sides, now in sharp abrupt bends and curves, now in long stretches of uphill and downhill road. We had turned our backs on the great ice-sheets (those strange white pages on which the Almighty writes so many mysterious lessons!) and had gone clattering through silent forests, and over dashing torrents, and past funny little brown-and-white toy villages, perched like wild birds' nests in the clefts of the rocks, till by-and-by a dazzling vision had unfolded itself before our eyes, olives began to crystallize the slopes, vineyards garlanded the valleys, the hills themselves flushed and paled, then flushed again with strange, soft, melting, opalescent tints; the very rocks seemed to burst forth into leaf and flowers, and so, step by step, we rolled down into sunshine, warmth, beauty, colour, fragrance, harmony, — Italy, in one word.

At Como a final separation of our forces took place. The head-master's holidays were nearly over. He must be setting his face homewards. He was as melancholy and low-spirited about it as any one of his boys could possibly be.

"You are a lucky young fellow, Myles," said he to me enviously. "You have no horde of young barbarians to beckon you back with inky fingers. You can wander at will through this sweet classic land of Homer and Cicero."

"Well, I think I had better see as much as I can of the country this year, since I am doomed to spend all my future summers at Margate," say I with a laugh.

"Only you will never find that washerwoman's daughter in Italy. The race does not exist!" cries Miss Brooke with a sorry glance at her own limp, crumpled draperies.

"Not really?" I ask incredulously. And then the steamer on which I stood, began to plunge and snort like a great

sea monster, as it was, and the head-master shouted out something about Baveno and Stresa, and dinner, and I went across the rippling, dimpling, dancing lake to Menaggio. I slept there that night, and the next day walked through the chestnut wood to Porlezza, where I again took ship, and crossed over to Lugano, from whence I wandered through more vineyards and cornfields and chestnut woods, till I found myself the following day at Luino.

There is a nice little inn at Luino, kept by two brothers who were formerly waiters at one of the large Milan hotels. They are pleasant little men, exactly alike, except that one has large, melancholy, brown eyes, and the other small, twinkling, black ones. They wait, cook, clean, and do everything in the hotel themselves. One of them cooked my lunch, and very well cooked it was; the other served me with it. They both came in at the finish, to receive my compliments.

"Have you had a good season?" I asked.

They shook their heads. It was their first year, indeed, and they had not expected much; but the result, unfortunately, had fallen far short of their very moderate expectations. Last night, however, they had had a stroke of luck. An invalid gentleman had occupied the whole of the first floor —

"But he leaves to-day," said the melancholy brother, with a sigh.

"Well, he is travelling for the benefit of his health; we could not expect him to stay here forever," replied the other.

"What is the matter with him?" I asked, more for the sake of prolonging my conversation with the two little men, than for any vivid interest I felt in the invalid gentleman.

"His malady is old age," said the black-eyed brother.

"And that is a malady that can never be cured," supplemented the melancholy one. And then, in a still more melancholy voice, he added that the *vapors* had just left Maccagno, and it was time to go down to the landing-place.

We started off down the hot, white, sun-bleached road. The two little men accompanied me. They were in hopes of fresh arrivals. The invalid gentleman drove down in his carriage. It passed us just as we reached the fruit-booth in the square.

The invalid gentleman! Surely that was no invalid's face, nor a gentleman's

face either, that peered out of the window as the carriage passed us. No, it was a little, round, rosy face, with eyes as blue as the sky, and such a sweet, innocent, half-opened, wondering mouth. I saw it all in a turn of the wheel.

"I thought you spoke of a gentleman," say I to my two little men. But at that moment the steamer scraped against the sides of the little wooden pier, and a splashing and dashing of waves ensued; a plank was flung across between the boat and the shore, and the passengers came off and the passengers went on, in the midst of which general commotion my two little men disappeared in their characters of touters for their new hotel.

"I think we may go now," said a pretty, clear, rippling voice, in soft, slow Italian; and a little childish figure jumped out of the carriage.

An old man followed — a very old man — feeble and tottering. His coat hung in folds round his poor shrunken form; his head was bent, his face as grey as the ashes of a fire that is burnt out. He looked absolutely stepping head-foremost into the grave.

The girl helped him carefully out of the carriage, and then slipping her arm in his, led him down to the little plank. I, following in their steps, could not help watching the pair. There was something so touching, so tender, in the way in which he clung to her, and she supported him.

At the plank all was bustle and confusion still; people were coming and going, and boxes were being carried across. The old man placed his trembling foot on this end of the plank just when a burly German at the other gave it an unconscious shove. The board slipped suddenly, the girl's hand was jerked out of the old man's, and in another second he would have been precipitated into the water, but for an intervening arm which was fortunately able to steady him, and drag him back to shore.

That intervening arm was mine, and I shall never forget the look of gratitude on the old man's face, nor the pretty words that came rippling from the young girl's lips like a little bubbling stream in spring-time.

We all went safely on board together a moment later, that little incident having made us friends on the spot.

The girl became very busy immediately, darting about hither and thither in search of cushions and stools, and look-

ing out for a comfortable seat for the old man, who was her father, probably, though he might with equal probability have been her grandfather as far as age went. She found one at last in a cosy corner, shaded from the sun, and sheltered from the wind. She sat down beside him herself, and peered out under the awning with her great, misty, blue eyes.

There was no room for me, and I flattered myself the little girl looked rather sorry in consequence. It could not be helped, however. The boat was full. I strolled away to the other end.

What a lovely scene burst, or rather stole, upon my gaze as I got away clear of the awning! That is one of the peculiar fascinations of Italian beauty. It does not startle you, overcome you all at once by its majesty and awe, as northern scenes do, but rather steals upon you slowly, spreading itself out before you, drop by drop, till it gradually overflows your soul. One's eyes, indeed, take some time to get accustomed to all this strange, soft, many-coloured atmosphere. It is like looking at the world through a rainbow. To-day, for instance: at first I could discern nothing but a golden mist, then a purple one, then a grey one, a blue one, a pink one, as one by one lake and mountain revealed themselves, distance beyond distance, range after range, all dressed up in shadows, with little villages at the foot of the hills, glittering in the western sun like jewels on a maiden's breast. Overhead the sky grew very clear and bright, and the big white clouds packed themselves away somewhere, and a few tiny pink cloudlets, like scattered, crumpled rose-leaves came drifting across the sun's pathway. Here and there a little boat went skimming across the lake, starring its glassy surface, and leaving behind it a track like a comet's tail. In the dim, delicious distance, the New Jerusalem itself, with its jasper walls and pearly gates, seemed to be dilating, drifting asunder, dividing itself into little glistening gem-like islands. And then, slowly and regretfully, the sun sank, and the mountains drew veils over their heads, and the lake's face was stained with great, streaming, crimson tears. For though in other parts of the world, the sun and the earth may aptly be likened to an old couple well used to each other's absences, in Italy they are still but a pair of sweethearts to whom this nightly parting gives nightly pain.

And so I drank my fill of all this de-

licious beauty, and then began to wish for some one to whom to "pass the cup." If only Miss Brooke had been present! My fellow-passengers were of the ordinary type—commonplace English and noisy Germans in superabundance. I found myself thinking of the two Italians at the other end of the boat, and by-and-by I threw away my cigar-end, and strolled back towards them.

The old man was asleep with his chin on his chest. The girl was awake, very wide awake, with a book across her lap.

"Do you read English?" I asked, with some surprise, going up to her, and seeing that the book in question was a Tauchnitz copy of Miss Thackeray's "Village on the Cliff." It is not often that an Italian girl even of the highest classes, such as I somehow judged this one to be, becomes proficient in a language which priests, and still more convent authorities, regard as somehow tainted with heresy.

"I can read it a little, signore," she answered modestly. "*He* likes me to learn it, you see" (indicating with a peculiar, lingering, sing-song accent, the sleeping man by her side). "He is so clever himself, and he thinks I have a little talent for languages. So all last winter, in Venice, I studied English. It is a beautiful language, and this is a beautiful book. The signore Inglese has read it, of course?"

I shook my head. The "signore Inglese" had read it, of course, and admired it greatly; but then—she looked so pretty when she talked.

"Tell me about it," said I.

"It is about a girl who marries a man she does not care for much at first, but who in the end she learns to love quite passionately. And yet, at one time, she thought she loved some one else, you know. But one can always learn to love what is good, and noble, and true, can one not? That is as sure as the hills." And she lifted up her clear, blue eyes, and looked at those solemn darkening heights with a long, lingering, wistful gaze.

"Do you come from the hills?" I asked, watching her. I was puzzled as to her nationality. Altogether Italian she could not be. She spoke the language prettily enough, but somewhat hesitatingly; and besides, her thoughts seemed to outrun her words, and the Italian ladies I had met hitherto, had mostly erred in the opposite direction. German she might possibly have been,

but then the old man evidently had not understood a single word of all that torrent of apologies poured upon him by the offending Teuton at the plank. No, he was unmistakably an Italian. His speech, his manner, his narrow, thin, high-featured face, the sudden way in which his dim, dark eyes would light up now and then, like stars flashing out through a mist, all betrayed him. But he might have married a foreigner — an Austrian perhaps, since he came from Venice. And it would be from her mother that the girl had inherited those lucid blue eyes, and that sweet, slow, hesitating speech of hers.

And so, when I said, "Do you come from the hills?" I intended to make a discovery. But all the answer I got was a quick, startled, searching glance, and a low, half-unwilling murmur.

"We have come — from Venice — last."

"But you are fond of the hills?" I urge.

"Fond of them! Ah!" she said with a little gasp. "You see, down here in the plains, it is all very beautiful; so warm, and sunshiny; and the country is so rich, the things grow of themselves without any trouble, and the people live well, because there is plenty of corn, and oil, and wine. But up there, among the mountains, it is always bleak and cold, and the winter lasts nine months of the year, and the birds die in the snow, and the people starve sometimes. And yet, somehow, it seems to me better to be up there, among the poor, hard-working people, who are so brave and hardy, than down here among folks who do nothing but enjoy life, just because they cannot help enjoying life. One seems to breathe purer air up there; one feels at least so much nearer heaven."

I looked at her astonished. These were most daring democratic sentiments to be delivered by such a pretty little aristocrat! What would Miss Brooke have said?

"You have a strong feeling for 'the people,'" I remark; "so have I. But I do not agree with you about the mountains. I have just come down from living at the top of some of them, and I did not feel half so near heaven then as I do now." It was the stupidest kind of compliment to pay, but it glanced off her as harmlessly as a poisoned arrow off a magic shield.

"It is just as one — knows," she replied quietly. And then she looked up

at the dark mountains again; and somehow, as she looked, it seemed to me that the light faded out of her eyes and the glow from her cheeks, and that her lips parted with a little sigh. Only why should she sigh as she looked at the hills?

"Frona!" said an old quavering voice rather sleepily. "What are you doing, *carina*? star-gazing as usual?" The voice was not unkind, only it sounded rather harsh and jarring at that moment. And indeed how should an old man like that, ever be able to enter into the feelings of so young a girl, even though she happened to be his own daughter?

"It is too dark to read," said Frona meekly. "Besides, we are getting very near Baveno now."

And at Baveno they landed. So did I. I had forgotten altogether the connection between Stresa and dinner, and I am not sure that it would have made much difference even if I had remembered.

All that night I seemed to be dreaming of Frona. The name was an odd one, but I liked it somehow. There was something quaint and unusual about it, like its owner. I dreamt of her on the mountain-tops, with the light of the sky in her eyes, and the breeze lifting her hair, and blowing it all about her sweet, sunny, rosy face. I dreamt of her in the midst of a gay world, all decked out in jewels and gold, and beautiful, trailing, mist-like dresses, but with the same innocent, bewildered, earnest gaze in her great blue eyes. And then I flew with her back to the mountains; that was the right background for her, after all, and pictured her trotting in and out of the quaint little Romansch houses, with their balconies and small round windows and big wooden doors, and talking to the peasants, and relieving their wants, and wondering over their brave hardy ways. Ah, no, not wondering; she must understand them, I think. She had known them, she said. That was the strangest part of all.

I did not see her at all the next day. They told us in the hotel that an invalid gentleman had arrived the night before, and begged us to make as little noise as possible in the passages. The invalid's name was Marchese San Giorgio. He came from Venice, and was a great man in his own country. My perspicacity was not at fault, you see.

Baveno is famous for its chestnut woods. They rise all around it, thick and shady, hiding away among the shadows the pretty little *paese* that lie nestling on

the hills. There are innumerable paths winding through the woods, funny little paved, stony ways, bounded by low grey walls. All day long people go up and down them on their bare brown feet, men, women, and children, with long deep baskets on their backs, stuffed full of chestnuts, or apples, or grapes. They move very slowly in a peculiar, swaying, swinging motion of their own, and they rest their baskets on the walls as you pass, and stare at you with great melancholy dark eyes. They have the greatest respect for "the stranger English," but they marvel at his power of locomotion. "Did the signore walk all the way from England here?" they ask wondering. Nothing short of an earthquake or a thunder-storm seems to rouse them to anything like activity or anxiety.

There was such a storm one day — one night, I should say, rather. All through the dark hours I had heard it raging round and round the hotel, now shaking the *persiennes*, now tapping at the windows as if to be let in, now bursting into torrents of rain, or flashing out sudden tongues of fire, and finally growling away in the distance, like an angry, disappointed beast of prey. When the morning came, however, all traces of the storm seemed to have disappeared. The sky was as clear as though there had never been a cloud across it; the lake laughed and dimpled like a little child at play. The little town indeed looked rather damp, and there was a perfect harvest of chestnuts under all the trees. One stumbled upon them at every step. They rolled away in all directions. "The ways and the woods smelt sweet," as I went up through them to Romanico, a little village behind Baveno. It was a deserted village for once. No chattering or chaffering from house to house; no children playing on the doorsteps; it all seemed silent as a tomb. A donkey stood in the principal street. His nose was stuffed into one door, his tail into another, the opposite one. It was a tight fit, but he seemed to enjoy it; and ejection was apparently impossible. I was just meditating a flying leap, when an old woman's head appeared over the donkey's tail. She unceremoniously dragged the obtuse quadruped backwards into her kitchen.

"It is my daughter's *asino*," she explained. "She has gone to gather chestnuts. They have all gone except me. I shall go no more, *menga, menga*."

At the end of the village a pretty jumble of sights met my eyes. A pump, a shrine

with the picture of a red saint in it; a house all balconies and outside stairs, and with strings of golden maize hanging round it; a road slanting down to the cemetery; a brook trickling away in various directions; a dazzle of sunshine zigzagging through the wet, interlacing leaves; and, under the trees, a group of villagers in their many-coloured petticoats, and broad-brimmed hats, raking up the chestnuts that had fallen during the night. They talked together very fast in their quaint, clipped Italian *patois*; but they worked very slowly in a languid, spiritless sort of way, as if such unwonted exertions wearied them greatly. One figure amongst them, however, seemed to be working with a will. I could see it darting hither and thither in a quick, eager way — a little, childish figure in some dark kind of dress, and a quantity of soft, fair hair, knotted up behind. Suddenly the knot of hair turned round, and I saw instead the sweet, flushed, flower-like face of the old marchese's F'rona.

She threw down her rake when she saw me. A chorus of voices rose round her.

"Oh, do not go yet, *bell' signuola* — not just yet. You teach us how to work. You work yourself like all the angels. You see, signore," (this was addressed to me, confidentially, by an old fellow in shirt-sleeves, and a velvetene waistcoat,) "the *bell' signuola* comes from a country where chestnuts are as scarce as gold; so she knows how to value them."

He was evidently chuckling to himself over the superiority of Lombardy to Venetia.

But the *bell' signuola* left her rake lying on the grass.

"I must go now, my friends," she said in her pretty, slow, hesitating Italian. "And I may never be able to come again. But you will remember, will you not? what I have told you about the poor people who live on the mountains, and who would be glad very often for a handful of those very chestnuts which you leave rotting on the ground."

And then she walked away by my side, just as if I had been sent out to fetch her home.

"I could not help doing that for once," she said half apologetically to me. "But I may not be able to go again. *He* might not like it, you know."

Like it — the marchese — no; I should think not. No man, however affable, would like to see his daughter working away among the peasants, getting her feet wet through, and her hands tanned

by the sun. And the Marchese San Giorgio was not an affable man, I judged. But I said nothing.

She caught my glance at her feet, however.

"Yes, they are wet," she said carelessly. "It is very uncomfortable when one wears boots. Otherwise, it does not matter."

"You ought to have been born a peasant," said I. Really this was going too far, even for me.

She looked up at me with a smile, but what a smile — frank, shy, confiding, questioning, artless, guileless, bashful, beautiful all at once. I lived on that smile for days.

I think it was about a week after this adventure that I received a little note from my young lady. It was a funny little note, stiffly written, and very stiffly expressed. It was merely to the effect that the marchese desired the honour of a visit from me at a stated time on the following afternoon. It was signed Veronica San Giorgio. I was a little surprised, but promised attendance, of course.

An hour or two before the eventful interview I strolled out into the hotel garden. Veronica San Giorgio was there. I had seen her from my bedroom window. She was sitting on the low wall that divides the garden from the lake. She was, I think, gazing at the hills as usual. She had a bunch of blue flowers on her lap.

She started up when she heard my step on the gravel, and came to meet me with her eager smile. Then something (was it something in my face or her own heart?) suddenly checked her: she blushed a little, and began listlessly pulling the flowers to pieces.

"Don't destroy your namesakes," said I, catching some of the blue fragments between my hands; "it seems cannibal-like. Do you know, I was wondering what your real name could be? F'rona is a pretty pet name, but Veronica is far prettier, I think."

"Do you think so?" she said indifferently. "*He* does not like it."

"Why did he give it you, then?" I asked, feeling nettled, I know not why.

She turned upon me that shy, questioning smile again.

"*He* did not give it me," she said slowly, "though he was my godfather. It seems so strange now to think of him as —"

"As your own father," said I, hastily supplying the blank. Parents do sometimes act as sponsors to their children, I believe.

"As my husband," she said softly and musingly, and letting the words die away in a sigh.

Her husband — that old man; that feeble, tottering, old grandfather? It seemed too horrible to be true. I could not utter a word, but I fear my face expressed my feelings.

"Yes — my husband," she repeated softly. "Did you not know? Are you very much surprised? Shall I tell you how it happened? You see, we lived on the mountains, and my father was a chamois-hunter, and once saved the marchese's life in the snow. After that the marchese never forgot us, but came back, year after year, generally living in our house, because there were not many hotels in the Engadine then. But one year, when he came (it was only a year ago), my father could not go out with him because he was ill, and things had gone badly with us, and we were very poor, because there were so many little ones at home now to be fed, and Cousin Bertöl besides; and my father said, "The signor marchese would do well to go to the Kulm Hotel. He will fare better there than here." But the signor marchese would not go to the Kulm Hotel; he would stay with us. He had something to say to my father. And this was what he said to my father. He had seen me grow up, and he wanted to marry me; and he promised to provide for the little brothers, and give portions to the little sisters, if only I would do so. But I must marry him with a clean heart — that is, declare honestly that I had never cared for any one else. So I made the declaration easily enough, for I was only fifteen then, and who else could I have seen to care for in that way? And then my father thanked me, and said I had made it easy for him to die; and the little brothers and sisters danced for joy, and everybody seemed pleased, except Cousin Bertöl. But the marchese kept his word, and gave him a piece of land for a farm, and sent all the little ones to good schools. And he was very kind to me, and carried me away to a beautiful palace by the sea, and gave me pretty dresses to wear, and jewels and lace, and everything I fancied. But, do you know, I was very wicked and ungrateful, and after awhile I grew tired of all these beautiful things, and even of the marchese's kindness, too, sometimes;

and I longed — oh! how I longed for a sight of a mountain storm, or a cross look from Cousin Bertòl. And then, the marchese's relations did not like me, and called me a stupid little *contadina*, and so he took me travelling, and said I had better not tell anybody exactly who I had been. But — but I could not help telling you, because —” And here she stopped short suddenly — stifled, as it were, by a burning blush. . . .

“Because — what?” I ask almost fiercely. I had listened to every word she said, and it seemed hard to be baulked of two or three more, and those, perhaps, the most important of all.

But she flew past me “like a flash of light.” She ran along the garden path into the hotel. A little line of blue veronica petals marked her track. I saw no more.

After all, my interview with the marchese never came off. I went to Stresa that same afternoon. But, strange to say, though I returned to England almost immediately afterwards, I was never able to give Dr. Brooke any lucid information concerning the dinner at the famous Iles Borromées.

One day in the following spring, as I went into my club, a little packet was put into my hands. How it ever reached me was a marvel. It was addressed to the “*Illustrissimo Signore Myles, Hôtel des Iles Borromées, Stresa*,” but the original direction had been crossed over by a variety of others. The seal had never been broken, however, till I broke it, and found within the packet a biggish box and a little letter. I opened the letter first. It was written in the stiff, childish hand I had seen once before, and was dated St. Moritz, Christmas day, 187—.

“Illmo. Signore,— I send you, in my husband's name, a small packet, containing a token of his regard for the service you rendered him that day at Luino. He had hoped to have placed it in your hands himself; and for that purpose, solicited the honour of a visit from you at Baveno. But you left before the hour of the visit, and we wondered much over your sudden absence. He is dead now, the good marchese; and I think I scarcely knew how good he was till he was gone from me. He left me much money; but I only kept enough to take me home to my mother, and have given the rest back to his family. What does one want with money when one lives on the mountains,

and if one has been born amongst them, one cannot live anywhere else; at least, not well. That is what Cousin Bertòl says. His farm has prospered. He wants me to go and live there with him some day. But I shall weary the signore Inglese with my affairs, and I only wanted to thank him for his kindness to me. For, from first to last, as the good signore will doubtless remember, I could not help talking to him about myself; because — because — I trust he will not be offended — he always reminded me so much of Cousin Bertòl.”

The letter was simply signed “F'rona,” the grand old Venetian name not being added to it.

The box contained two little miniatures of the marchese and his young wife. The portraits were very good: they were nicely painted, and set into cases adorned with coronets, and joined together with a knot of blue veronica flowers. They are the prettiest ornament in my bachelor rooms, and a frequent source of wonderment and speculation to my friends.

“You did not think I had such aristocratic acquaintance?” say I laughing, to Miss Brooke one day, when she and some other lady friends had honoured my rooms with their company at a tea-party.

Miss Brooke looked at the miniatures long and earnestly.

“I remember the face, now!” she said. “It is the face that looked out of the travelling-carriage, and laughed at our snow-balls on the Bernina Pass. And I remember the story too. The girl was the daughter of some people at St. Moritz, who had once been in tolerable circumstances, but had become very poor. And then the marquis appeared, and carried her off. It was quite like a fairy story; but I wonder if she was happy, poor little thing! I remember her mother used to talk about ‘my daughter, the marchioness,’ but I never could learn much from her. She did part of the washing at the Kulm, you know. Why, Mr. Myles,” with sudden animation, “there's a chance for you — a washerwoman's daughter and a marquis's widow, the rarest, most perfect combination. Why don't you think about it? That face would create a sensation at Margate, I am sure.”

It was a home-thrust, was it not? But, as it happened, I was thinking of something else just then.

After all, too, I did not go to Margate

the following summer, but back to the Engadine, and Miss Brooke went with me. Only not as Miss Brooke any longer, but as Mrs. Myles.

We had both of us mutually agreed to forget all about the washerwoman's daughter.

As we drove up through the winding pine woods to St. Moritz, a sound of bridal bells struck upon our ears.

"It's an appropriate greeting," said I sentimentally.

"It is a wedding," said Pankraz, our driver, looking back sulkily from his box-seat. "The prettiest girl in all the country-side has married the ugliest man in the world to-day."

This was not flattering if names were what I suddenly suspected they were, and there was any reality in the resemblance alluded to by the marchesa in her letter.

"Is the lady's name F'rona, and the man's Bertòl?" I asked.

Pankraz nodded.

"Ay, and such a one as Bertòl to pretend to the hand of our F'rona, who had been married once before, to a marquis, you know. But, you see, a grand life soon wearied her, not being born to it, as she said, and so she took up with this ugly Bertòl. Not but what there might have been others——" And here the little man suddenly twisted himself round on his seat, and began whipping his horses somewhat viciously.

From which I infer that one or two others besides ugly Cousin Bertòl might possibly have liked to possess themselves of the hand of the pretty little Marchesa F'rona.

From Temple Bar.

THE DAYS OF HENRI QUATRE.

"Le seul roi dont le peuple ait gardé la mémoire."

THE marriage of Philip the Fair with Joanna the First, queen of Navarre, rendered that kingdom from 1288 to 1512 an appanage to the crown of France. In the latter year, Ferdinand, upon some slight pretence, seized upon all the Navarese territory south of the Pyrenees, and annexed it to Spain. It was to the remnant which lay upon the northern side of the great mountain chain that Henry, the future king of France, was born heir on December the 14th, 1553. His mother, Jeanne d'Albret, was the daughter of Henri d'Albret, king of

Navarre, and Marguerite d'Angoulême, sister of Francis the First, better known as Marguerite de Navarre, the writer of the "Heptameron." His father was Antoine de Bourbon. Certain curious circumstances attended his birth. In fulfilment of a promise made to her father, Queen Jeanne sang the whole time she was in labour, in order that the child should neither weep nor make "wry" faces; and, so says tradition, the boy came into the world without crying, and his grandfather immediately carried him away to his own apartment and rubbed his lips with a clove of garlic, and made him suck some wine out of a golden cup to make his constitution sound and vigorous. His childhood was passed in an old castle situated in the midst of a wild, mountainous country, about which he wandered barefooted and bareheaded, and fed upon brown bread, beef, cheese, and garlic, like other children of the country. But while such rough training strengthened his body, his education was assiduously attended to, and he became an excellent scholar. When still a child he was presented to Henry the Second of France, who asked him if he would be his son.

"He is my father," replied the prince, pointing to the king of Navarre.

"Well, then," said Henry, "will you be my son-in-law?"

"Oh, with all my heart," was the reply.

And from that time, we are informed, his marriage with the Princess Marguerite was resolved upon. A letter in the "*Mémoires de Nevers*," dated 1567, thus describes him:—

We have here [says the writer] the prince of Béarn; it must be confessed he is a charming youth. At thirteen years he has all the ripe qualities of eighteen or nineteen; he is agreeable, polite, obliging, and behaves to every one with an air so easy and engaging that wherever he is there is always a crowd. He mixes in conversation like a wise and prudent man, speaks always to the purpose, and, when it happens that the court is the subject of discourse, 'tis easy to see that he is perfectly well acquainted with it, and never says more nor less than he ought, in whatever place he is.

Vigorous and indefatigable by the education of his infancy [writes Sully] he breathed nothing but labour, and seemed to wait with impatience for occasions of acquiring glory. The crown of France not being yet the object of his aspiring wishes, he indulged himself in forming schemes for the recovery of that of Navarre, which Spain had unjustly usurped

from his family; and this he thought he might be enabled to perform by maintaining a secret intelligence with the Moors of Spain. The enmity he bore to this power was open and declared; it was born with him, and he never attempted to conceal it. . . . The vast and flattering expectations which the astrologers agreed in making him conceive were almost always present to his mind. He saw the foundation of them in that affection which Charles the Ninth early entertained for him, and which considerably increased a short time before his death; but, animated as he was by these happy presages, he laboured to second them only in secret, and never disclosed his thoughts to any person but a small number of his most intimate confidants.

His father, Antoine de Bourbon, was a man of weak and undecided character. Born in the Protestant faith, he renounced it about the time that his wife abjured Catholicism. But he never cordially supported either party. He was slain at the siege of Rouen, in 1562, fighting under his enemies, the Guises, against the Protestants, whom he loved. Jeanne d'Albret, the mother, was born a Catholic, but afterwards became a rigid Calvinist, in the tenets of which faith she carefully reared her son. Catherine de Medicis conceived a hatred against the young prince. Sully ascribes this feeling to the prophecy of an astrologer, who foretold that none of her sons should have issue, in which case the crown would pass to the Bourbons. To the fear of this event the same historian imputes the marriage of her daughter Claude with the Duc de Lorraine, to whose posterity she destined the throne of France.

Young Henry gave early promise of military genius. He was present at the battle of Jarnac when scarcely fourteen years of age, and although the troops were commanded by such great leaders as Condé and Coligny, he was able to point out the errors by which that engagement was lost. After the peace of St. Germain * (1570), Jeanne d'Albret retired with her son and the young Prince de Condé, whose father had been slain at Jarnac, to Rochelle, where the shattered remains of the Huguenot army had taken shelter.

"I offer you," she said, addressing the leader, "my son, who burns with a holy ardour to avenge the death of the prince we all regret. Behold, also, Condé's son, now become my own child. He suc-

ceeds to his father's name and glory. Heaven grant that they may both show themselves worthy of their ancestors."

During the following year commenced the negotiations for the celebration of the marriage between Henry and Marguerite, in fulfilment of their child-betrothal. The union seemed to promise great advantages to the Protestants, and, after much doubt and irresolution, Jeanne, Coligny, and the chiefs of the party, commenced, in the summer of 1572, their fatal journey to Paris.

The welcome which the queen of Navarre and her children received from the king and the queen-mother was most cordial. The pope refused to give the dispensation for the nuptials of the princess with a heretic, but Charles resolved they should be celebrated in spite of him. "I marry my sister," he said, "not only to the prince of Béarn, but to the whole Protestant party; it will be the strongest bond between my subjects, and the surest evidence of my good-will towards those of the religion."

The court appeared eager, by every outward demonstration, to prove its sincerity. The nuptials were performed with the utmost pomp and magnificence. Charles, Henry, and Condé were dressed alike, to indicate their close affection. The Venetian ambassador, describing the scene, says:—

You would not believe there was any distress in the kingdom. The king's toque, charger, and garments, cost from five to six hundred thousand crowns. Anjou, among other jewels in his toque, had a set of thirty-two pearls, bought for the occasion at the cost of twenty-three thousand gold crowns of the sun. More than a hundred and twenty ladies dazzled the eyes with the brilliancy of their sumptuous silks, brocades, and velvets, thickly interwoven with gold or silver.

At church the dazzling beauty of the bride disturbed the devotions of the worshippers. She had just completed her twentieth year; her complexion was clear, her hair black, her eyes full of fire, though at times remarkable for a dreamy languor, which gave her a voluptuous and tender look, as if to indicate a heart that was framed for love. All her movements were full of grace and majesty. She was unrivalled in the dance, and played on the lute and sang with exquisite taste.* But there was a reverse to this charming picture; she was untruthful, vain, extravagant, and

* Brantôme is yet more eulogistic in writing of this princess, whom he describes as a miracle of beauty and accomplishments. Nor did those qualities form her only claim to admiration; she was a fine Greek and Latin scholar, and became one of the most elegant writers of her age.

* See article "Catherine de Medicis," LIVING AGE, No. 1625.

hoped by her devotion to the forms of religion to atone for the errors of her daily life. . . . Margaret's dress on her wedding-day was long the talk of court gossips. In such matters her taste was peculiar and exquisite. Briliants flamed like stars among her hair; her stomacher was sprinkled with pearls, so as to resemble a silvery coat of mail; her dress was of cloth of gold, and rare lace of the same precious metal fringed her gloves and handkerchief.

In order that no proof of his friendship and liberality might be wanting, Charles went so far as even to dispense with the bridegroom's attendance at the church of Notre Dame, and with all Romish observances upon his part. The marriage was performed upon a great scaffold erected in the court before the church. The ceremony concluded, the prince went to meeting to hear a sermon, the princess into the church to hear mass; after which they repaired to the great hall of the palace, to be present at the sumptuous entertainment prepared in their honour.

The marriage was an unhappy one. There was the fatal difference of creed; then the lady's gallantries were notorious. Exasperated by the meddling of the Calvinist ministers, who interfered with the exercise of her religious rites, she favoured the Leaguers against her husband; by-and-by he accused her, whether rightly or wrongly it would be difficult to say, of an attempt to poison him; from that time the breach became irreparable, and they lived entirely separate until their divorce in 1598. That she was more sinned against than sinning, that her faults were those of her age and nation, and not of her heart, is amply proved by contemporaneous evidence. Sully tells us of her sweetness of temper, her resignation, her disinterestedness. Another historian says:—

She was the refuge of men of letters, loved to hear them talk, her table was constantly surrounded with them, and she learned so much from conversing with them that she spoke better than any woman of her time, and wrote more correctly than most persons of her sex are capable of doing. In short, as charity is the queen of all virtues, this great princess crowned hers by giving alms, which she did so liberally to all who stood in need of them, that there was not a religious house in Paris that did not feel the effect of her bounty, nor one poor person who had recourse to her that did not meet with relief.

The crowning proof of the goodness of her disposition is in the fact of her ceding during her lifetime the large estates she

had inherited from her mother to the daughter, the child of the woman who had usurped her place. She survived the king several years, not dying until 1615.

Her nuptials were celebrated on the 18th of August, 1572, just six days previous to St. Bartholomew's eve. On the 23rd of the same month, the king gave instructions to a gentleman who was departing for Rome to justify the marriage to the pope upon political grounds, as it would closely bind Henry's interests to the crown of France. On the same date he wrote to De Ferrails, that the marriage was necessary, and therefore it had been solemnized without waiting for the dispensation, to the great satisfaction of all his subjects. *But in all these most confidential instructions he makes not the faintest allusion to the coming horror.**

Two hours before daybreak on the morning of the 24th, Prince Henry and the Prince de Condé, who were lodged in the Louvre, were aroused from their sleep by the entrance of a number of soldiers, who slew their attendants, and commanded them to rise, dress, and follow them to the king.† Charles received them with furious looks, and with oaths and blasphemies commanded them to renounce their religion, which he pronounced to be only a cloak to rebellion; and declared that, if they did not go to mass, he would treat them as criminals guilty of treason against human and divine majesty. The young princes were compelled to yield to necessity; and Henry, kept close prisoner, was even forced to send an edict to his subjects forbidding the exercise of any other religion than the Roman Catholic within his dominions.

Sixteen months afterwards Charles was summoned to his account.

The night after he received the news of his brother's death, the Duc d'Anjou, who at the end of 1572 had been elected king of Poland, fled his kingdom. In his journey to France he visited the emperor Maximilian and Charles, duke of Savoy, both of whom advised him to grant the Huguenots peace and the free exercise of their religion. But immediately upon his accession to the throne he broke the truce that had been concluded for three months, and declared war against them.

* Another point in favour of my theory of the massacre: see "Catherine de Medicis."

† Brantôme asserts that it was only by the intercession of the Princess Marguerite that her husband's life was spared; but there does not appear to be sufficient proof that she was made acquainted with the plot. Probably the preservation of the two princes was rather due to some lingering traces of natural affection in the heart of Charles.

In the following year young Henry, while hunting near Senlis, contrived his escape, proceeded to Tours, resumed the public exercise of the Protestant religion, and, uniting himself with Condé and the Duc d'Alençon,* found himself at the head of fifty thousand troops. But the bloody war which appeared imminent was averted by Catherine's address, and a treaty known in history as "Monsieur's Peace," was signed in 1576. Hostilities, however, were renewed a few months afterwards, and continued until the king, jealous of the growing power of Guise, and weary of war, suddenly brought it to an end, and gave himself up to that sensual and luxurious life which has rendered his name infamous to posterity.

No more startling and unexpected contrast to the preceding scenes of turmoil can be imagined than that presented by the court of France under Henry the Third. Let us endeavour to conjure up a picture of its splendour, its luxury, its infamy.

Imagine vast chambers, the walls of which are covered by hangings of black or yellow leather adorned with cyphers in gold and silver and Byzantine arabesques, the apartments are divided by heavy velvet curtains, and are furnished with seats of elaborately carved oak; with curious chests of ivory or ebony, relieved by crests of azure or *fleur-de-lis* of gold; silver statuettes; coffers adorned with trefoils of gold, or salamanders formed with topaz, emeralds, or turquoise. Imagine these *salons* peopled with yellow-haired courtiers, beautiful as Antinous, their graceful forms clothed in tight-fitting jackets, encircled by belts of red, yellow, or blue silk embroidered, like a Byzantine missal, with precious stones; a small cloak hangs from the shoulder, a small cap of green or blue velvet covers the head, and earrings of gold or jewels hang from the ears. Some are attired yet more gorgeously. Bonnets of black velvet, breeches and doublets of cloth of silver, shoes and sword-scabbards of white velvet, long sweeping mantles of black velvet embroidered with *fleur-de-lis* and tongues of flame, and monograms of the king in silver thread, and turned up with orange satin; from the shoulders, in lieu of a hood, hangs a mantelet of cloth of gold, also enriched with *fleur-de-lis*, monograms, and tongues of flame; a

grand collar formed of knots of monograms, *fleur-de-lis*, and tongues of flame, to which hangs a large dove, encircles the neck. These are the knights of the most noble order of Saint-Esprit, the *mignons*, Saint-Maigrin, Joyeuse, D'Epernon, etc., all destined to an infamous immortality in the pages of history. Their occupations are various: some are fencing with their long rapiers; others are playing at cup and ball; others are gaily laughing and chatting. Suddenly there is a momentary lull; the swords are sheathed, the playthings cast aside, the laughter hushed, and every head is uncovered. The velvet hangings of one of the doorways are pulled aside by two gorgeously-attired pages, and a strange figure enters upon the scene. It looks like a man, but the costume, low-necked and elegant, is that of a woman; so is the complexion, rendered delicate in appearance by pastes and *cosmétiques*. Suspended round its neck is a basket of blue satin, in which are several very small dogs, whose long silky ears it is caressing with its jewelled hands, more white and beautiful than those of any lady. These hands are the object of much care; they are nightly encased in gloves of a peculiar skin to preserve their delicacy. This creature, half man, half woman, is Henry the Third, the sovereign of warlike France, and one, too, who ere now has proved himself a general of no mean courage. Round him gather the *mignons*, eager to relate their scandalous adventures of the previous night; stories especially delightful to the royal ears. Maigrin relates in Rabelaisque language the story of a rendezvous with the frail Duchesse de Guise, an amour which will presently cost him his life; Henry smiles delightedly, for, like his brother, he mortally hates the Guises. Suddenly his face changes to a look of horror, his eyes are darting flames upon D'Epernon, whom, in accents trembling with passion, he orders from his presence; and, as the discomfited courtier hastens to obey, literally chases him with opprobrious epithets from the chamber. What offence has the favourite committed? The gravest of all in the eyes of his master—he has neglected the proprieties of costume, and dared to stand before majesty with doublet buttoned awry and without white shoes!

This is a day of Saint-Esprit. But Henry, spite of the gaiety of his court, is the prey of chronic melancholy, and there are other days when the silk and the

* Alençon, Catherine's youngest son, aspirin, to the crown, had, after Anjou's accession, been kept prisoner with Henry of Navarre, but had escaped some time before.

cloth of gold are exchanged for coarse black robes and monkish cowls — costume of the Brotherhood of Death; an order instituted, some say, to commemorate the death of one of his *mignons*, others, that of his mistress, the Princesse de Condé. The emblem of this order is a skull decked and intertwined with jewels; its directors are monks and friars, and even *bourgeois* are honoured by admittance to its ranks. There is yet another order, that of the White Penitents, to which only the favourites are admitted. There are secrets and mysteries in these brotherhoods, such, perhaps, as those that were practised by the votaries of Isis.

Among the people, by whom they are regarded with horror and abhorrence, the courtiers are known as *les politiques*, another name for infidels; they carry disorder into the homes of the *bourgeois*, often forcibly breaking into their houses, corrupting their wives and daughters; and, worse than that, eating flesh on fast days! This last the most inexpiable crime of all in the eyes of the good people of Paris, who are strict and reverential observers of the worship and ordinances of the Church; for many generations have to be born and buried before scepticism and blasphemy will descend from the court to the city.

But although *les politiques* are mockers and infidels, they have their superstitions. One day they shock the eyes of sober citizens with their flouting, ribald airs, as they ride gaily in rustling silks and velvets, waving plumes, and glittering jewels. The next, a far stranger sight greets them. Through the narrow, tortuous streets wends a band of pilgrims, barefooted, half clothed in sackcloth; each bears a scourge in his hand, with which he flagellates his naked shoulders until the thongs drop blood; these are the king and his *mignons* expiating past sins, and buying from their fetich immunity for new.

Sometimes across the brilliant sunshine of *les jours de Saint-Esprit* crosses the dark shadow of the Guise, fanatic in action, latitudinarian in heart, really indifferent to all creeds, save that of the faction which promises to raise him to power. Seldom does that ill-omened shadow fall upon the precincts of the court without bringing bloodshed and death in its train. To Saint-Joyeuse and his companions the grim Leaguers are objects of mockery and contempt; to the fanatics *un politique* is as abhorrent as a

Huguenot. Actuated by such mutual sentiments, they seldom meet without drawing swords, and many bloody duels are the consequence. Maugiron and Quélus are both slain in one of these.* The king is inconsolable, throws himself upon their bodies, kissing them, and cutting off their yellow locks to preserve as mementoes. A few months afterwards Saint-Maigrin falls beneath the dagger of an assassin employed by the Duc de Guise, to avenge his honour.

In 1585 that terrible confederation known as the League began to assume a dangerous form. It arose out of an association of princes, prelates, and gentlemen of Picardy who met at Peronne, to avoid obeying the edict given in the year 1576 in favour of the Protestants. The manifesto then drawn up served as a model to all the other provinces, as well as to the states of Blois, which were summoned about the end of that year. The professed object of the League was at first simply the maintenance of the Catholic as the sole religion of the realm; but at length it embraced the settlement of the succession to the crown, to which Guise aspired, and to secure which for him at length became the confirmed purpose of this faction. Jealousy and fear fluctuated the king between the two parties: now he was on the side of Navarre, now intimidated by the threats of the Leaguers, he deserted his ally, and ordered the very troops he had sent to his assistance to act against him.

And so year after year this fratricidal war went on. Fire and sword ravaged every town and village; every plain was a battle-field, every wood an ambuscade; the high roads were choked up with thorns and brambles for want of traffic, and the whole land became one huge Golgotha. Never did man display more skill, more genius in the art of war, more unwearyed patience, more iron resolution, more dauntless courage, and yet more merciful moderation, than did the brave king of Navarre. His army was considerable, and composed of the most incongruous materials, Germans, English, Huguenots, Catholics; it required the most extraordinary address to reconcile the feuds and jealousies of these discordant elements, and make them act to-

* Duelling was carried to a terrible excess in this reign, but to an even greater in the next. In 1607 it was computed that four hundred gentlemen had been killed in duels since the accession of Henry the Fourth. A king whose whole life had been passed in fighting could not but regard such offences as venial, nor be induced to make their punishment sufficiently deterrent.

gether. The name of his enemies was legion; noble, *bourgeois*, and peasant — the hand of every man was against him. But there was a boundless elasticity in his nature that no difficulties or reverses could crush or even depress; he was a true soldier of fortune. In the battle, his white plume was ever waving in the thickest of the fight; seldom ever a *denier* in his pocket or a change of linen to his back; black bread and water his frequent diet, the earth his bed, the sky his canopy. But when fortune guided his steps to some friendly *château*, none drank and feasted, jested, and made love more freely than he.

Vive Henri Quatre !
Vive ce roi vaillant !
Le diable à quatre
A le triple talent,
De boire et de battre
Et d'être vert galant.

J'aimons les filles,
Et j'aimons le bon vin
De nos vieux drilles.
Répétons le refrain :
J'aimons les filles
Et j'aimons le bon vin.

So sang his friends. Such a life does not tend to beautify the person; and nature had not been bountiful in charms to the gallant Henry. At thirty-three his complexion was tanned almost black, his hair and beard were grizzled, while a nose of inordinate length almost covered his mouth; nevertheless, no king has been more famous for his amours, even in those days, when his poverty and the hopelessness of his cause were sufficient guarantees of the ladies' disinterestedness. One of his earliest and most devoted loves was the Comtesse de Guiche, better known as "*la belle Corisande*," who raised for him a force of twenty-four thousand Gascons at her own expense, mortgaging *châteaux*, lands, and all she possessed, to supply his needs. But most famous of all his innamoratas was Gabrielle d'Estrées, afterwards Duchesse de Beaufort, whom her lover has immortalized in the song commencing "*Charmante Gabrielle*." One evening, after a skirmish in the neighbourhood, he took up his lodgings for the night at Cœuvres, her father's *château* in Picardy. Struck by her charming manners and exquisite beauty, he became deeply enamoured; and, as she listened to the stories of daring courage and wild adventure he related at the family board, something of a reciprocal

feeling entered her heart. Many and romantic were the dangers he encountered to gain even a sight of the lady. Once, while in pursuit of the prince of Parma, he stole away from Attichy to see her; "*contenting himself*," says Matthieu, "*with eating some bread and butter at the gate, that he might not raise any suspicion in her father*. Afterwards, mounting his horse, he said he was going towards the enemy, and that the fair one should soon hear what he had performed through his passion for her." At another time he disguised himself as a wood-carrier, and passed through the enemy's lines, at the great risk of being discovered and taken prisoner, to procure an interview with her. It was no passing infatuation, but a passion that, far from cooling through lapse of years, continued to strengthen until it was dissolved by death.

But to leave the doves and return to the kites. In 1587 he gained a considerable victory over the king's troops at Coutras. "*There is no need of a long speech*," he said, addressing his cousins, Condé and De Soissons, before the battle. "*Remember you are all Bourbons, and, God willing, I will show you I am your eldest brother*." So daring was he on that day that some of his friends threw themselves before him. "*Give me room!*" he cried; "*you stifle me*." When the Duc de Joyeuse fell, and the enemy began to waver, he checked the fury of the soldiers. "*Victory is certain!*" he exclaimed; "*but they are brave — they are all Frenchmen — show them all mercy*." The corpses of Joyeuse and his brother were drawn from beneath a heap of slain, and laid upon a table in the hall of the castle of Coutras. Some of the young Huguenots passed scurrilous jests upon the bodies. Henry sternly reproved them. "*This is a moment of tears even for the vanquished!*" he cried. His letter to King Henry is highly characteristic. "*Sire, my lord and brother*," it ran; "*thank God, I have beaten your enemies and your army*." The royalists numbered ten thousand, and five thousand were left upon the field. The Protestants had but five thousand and lost scarcely a hundred.

A few months later, the good citizens of Paris, disgusted at the inclination he manifested towards the Huguenots, and at the entrance of six thousand Swiss into the city to intimidate the Leaguers, rose against their king, and threw up bar-

ricades in the streets, even to within fifty paces of the Louvre. The revolt assumed so dangerous an appearance that he fled to Chartres, and thence to Blois. Upon hearing of this Henry of Navarre sent a messenger to him, placing himself and his troops entirely at his disposal. But ere an answer to these offers could be received, came the news of the terrible deed which embittered the Catholics more than ever against the king. This was the assassination of the Duc and Cardinal de Guise, by the order and in the apartments of the king, at his palace at Blois, where he was then holding the States.* The bodies were afterwards burned in a hall of the castle, and the ashes thrown into the air. Of course Henry was excommunicated by the pope; while nearly every provincial town, following the example of the capital, closed her gates against him. He at once made common cause with Navarre, and the two kings laid siege to Paris. But the doom of one was already sealed. On the night of the 2nd of August, 1589, Jacques Clément, a fanatical monk, obtained admission into the king of France's chamber, under pretence of delivering a letter, and stabbed him with a poisoned knife. A priest had administered the sacrament to the murderer, knowing his purpose, before he set out on this holy expedition, and the pontiff, who had just before invoked divine vengeance upon the destroyer of one of his adherents, pronounced a eulogy upon this act. Assassination used to be one of Rome's primary articles of faith — why has she not a Saint Stiletto in her calendar? She has consecrated the dagger often enough. Paris went into ecstasies, placed the pictures of Jacques Clément upon their altars beside the eucharist, and wrote underneath, "Saint Jacques."

The death of the king had no effect upon the siege operations. Never did Henry of Navarre's clemency shine more conspicuously than at this time, while investing the city wherein had been performed the tragedy of Saint Bartholomew, and wherein every man execrated his name as a heretic, and would willingly have armed himself with a dagger against his life: —

* Except upon moral grounds, we can feel no sympathy for the fate of this miscreant, the arch-destroyer of Saint Bartholomew's eve. His death cleared Henry of Navarre's path to the crown, which otherwise he would probably never have attained, and was the destruction of a conspiracy which aimed even at the dethronement of Elizabeth of England, and the total extirpation of the Protestants throughout Europe.

The king [writes Sully] naturally compassionate, was moved by the distress of the Parisians; he could not endure the thought of seeing this city, the empire which was destined him by Providence, become one vast churchyard. He secretly permitted everything that could contribute to its relief, and affected not to observe the supplies of provisions which the officers and soldiers suffered to enter the city, either out of compassion to their relations and friends who were in it or with a design to make the citizens purchase them at a high price. Without doubt, he imagined this conduct would gain him the hearts of the Parisians; but he was deceived; they enjoyed his benefits without ceasing to look upon him as the author of their miseries, and, elated with the prince of Parma's arrival, they insulted him, who only raised the siege because he was too much affected with the miseries of the besieged.

Although he might have taken the city by storm, he would not do so, as he knew the Protestant soldiers were bent upon retaliation for Saint Bartholomew: —

The Duc de Nemours [says Péréfixe] sent all useless mouths out of Paris. The king's council opposed his granting them a passage; but the king, being informed of the dreadful scarcity to which these miserable wretches were reduced, ordered that they should be allowed to pass. "I am not surprised," said he, "that the Spaniards and the chiefs of the League have no compassion upon these poor people; they are only tyrants; as for me, I am their father and their king, and cannot bear the recital of their calamities without being pierced to my inmost soul, and ardently desiring to bring them relief."

After the city had gone through unnamable horrors, thirty thousand people having died of famine, the siege was raised.

Three years of sieges, battles, victories, and defeats, and then, in 1583, Henry abjured the Protestant faith. Sully, who, although a conscientious Calvinist, was a better patriot, claims the credit of bringing about this sacrifice to necessity, and fully sets forth his reasons. France would not have a Huguenot king; and if Henry relinquished his rights the Leaguers would become masters of the nation, and these, in their turn, would most probably be overridden by the Spaniards, their allies. What, then, would be the fate of the Protestants? Extermination. Added to such considerations as these was the terrible condition of the war-desolated land. No scruples could justify a Christian monarch in refusing to avert so many evils: —

I explained [he tells us] all my thoughts on

this subject to the king, and added, that the foundation of all religions which believe in Jesus Christ being essentially the same, that is, faith in the same mysteries, and the same notions of the divinity, it seemed to me that one who, from a Catholic became a Protestant, or from a Protestant became a Catholic, did not change his religion, but followed for the interest of religion itself that which policy suggested as the most proper means to compose differences. . . . That the difference of religions had long produced the most tragical effects in France, and was a perpetual source of disorders and calamities, by the aversion with which it inspired people against those of a contrary faith to their own, which was equally the case with the Protestants as well as the Catholics. I told the king that he might cure this dangerous evil by uniting those who professed these different religions in the bands of Christian charity and love.

All the most zealous and talented churchmen now surrounded the monarch, and by means of discourses and controversies with the Huguenot clergy sought to convince him of the errors of his faith.

It is not surprising [continues Sully] that Henry, who never heard any arguments about religion but in these conferences and continual controversies, should suffer himself to be drawn on that side which they took care to make always victorious. For it must be observed, as an effect of the king's prudent delays, that every one, even Protestants, nay more, the Protestant clergy who were employed in the conferences, were at last thoroughly convinced that the king's change of religion was a circumstance absolutely necessary for the good of the State, for peace, and even for the advantage of both religions, so that there was a kind of general combination to draw him to it. The Protestant clergy either defended themselves no longer or did it so weakly that their adversaries always had the advantage.

And so Henry was received into the bosom of the mother Church, acknowledged the power and supremacy of the pope, and all the tenets of the Romish faith. "After which," adds Sully, "the satisfaction was general." Nor is there any reason to doubt that the conversion was a conscientious one. But this was by no means the end of the troubles; the League and its allies, the Spaniards, still upheld the standard of revolt, and twice in the course of little more than a year invoked the aid of their patron saint, Stiletto. The first time the king received timely warning, and the would-be assassin was seized; the second, he was wounded in the lip by one John Chatel, a pupil of the Jesuits, for which the whole order was banished the kingdom. The

war against Spain was, of necessity, hotly pursued. Henry's one faithful and honest friend, Rosny (afterwards Duc de Sully), endeavoured by rigid economy and attention to expenditure to recruit the exhausted exchequer; but others, more powerful than he, ruled at the council of finance, who appropriated the moneys, and lived in luxury, while the king, his household, and army wanted common necessities. Writing to Rosny while at the siege of Arras, he says: "I am very near my enemies, and hardly a horse to carry me into the battle, nor a complete suit of armour to put on; my shirts are all ragged, my doublet out at eldow, my kettle is seldom on the fire, and these last two days I have been obliged to dine where I could, for my purveyors have informed me that they have not wherewithal to furnish my table." As a companion to this picture of royal distress, we have that of the superintendent of finance spending 25,000 crowns upon costly dishes for his supper-table.

So powerless was Henry in his present condition to remedy these evils, that it was with difficulty he could procure Rosny admission to the council; for, being a Huguenot, much as he loved him, he dared show him but little favour. The picture of corruption which Sully has bequeathed us in his "Memoirs" is at once amusing and appalling. He tells us:—

By clearing only two old accounts, and bringing together the receipts and letters of exchange for the current year and the year preceding, I easily collected more than five hundred thousand crowns which had been lost to the king. . . . However, I could not keep myself clear of several considerable errors, nor escape being tricked by these old practitioners. This very year, 1596, they gained a profit of one-fifth, which is exorbitant, though infinitely less than their ordinary gains. One of the chief tricks of the financiers was to make the expenses of the current year appear to be much more than the receipts, and to anticipate the revenue of the following year; by which means the expenses of the next year and of all the rest in succession were thrown into confusion, from which these men drew many advantages, particularly that of appearing to never have money which was not pre-engaged long before. In the second place, they made use of that money; and, to conclude, they paid off the old debts at a very low price, and yet charged them entire in their accounts. This negligence of mine cost the kingdom this year two millions.

But Leaguers, Spaniards, and false stewards, were not the only enemies who

troubled the king; his old friends, the Huguenots, dissatisfied with their position, were in all but open revolt against his authority. Indifferent to the pitiable condition to which war had reduced their country, they violently opposed peace with Spain; and Madame de Rohan and D'Aubigné even went so far as to propose taking up arms and forcing the king to subscribe to whatever conditions they chose to propose. The Edict of Nantes, which conferred upon them full toleration, silenced these cabals for a time.

Gay, good-natured, *sans souci*, as in the old adventurous days, ever infatuated by some new *belle maîtresse*, but not neglectful of the old ones, Henry consoled himself with hunting, love-making, feasting, balls, and *fêtes*, for the hardships of his early life. His was not the silken court of the last Valois; the effeminate refinement of his predecessor had given place to a rougher and more virile element; the *mignons* and their master would have been infinitely shocked by the rude figures of the Gascon nobles, with their thick untrimmed beards, their long swords, their sunburnt hands and visages, their coarse and frequently shabby attire, for, like the Scots of the first Stuart's days, poverty was their badge; nor would the figure of the sovereign himself have been more grateful to their eyes, in his suit of dull pearl grey, often the worse for wear, and smelling, not of Italian essences, but of wild herbs. These men had passed too many years of their lives in camps not "to relish of them." Yet, for all this, if wanting the elegance of past times, there were shows, and plays, and ballets, and splendour enough. And it was in the midst of one of the most splendid of these *fêtes* that came the news of the Spaniards having surprised and taken Amiens. "The weak, piping time of peace" was over for a while.

Charmente Gabrielle,
Percé de mille dards,
Quand la gloire m'appelle
A la suite de Mars.

So sang the gallant king in adieu to his beloved mistress, as he rode away to the wars. In the following year (1598) peace was again concluded.

But close at hand was the great sorrow of his life. Amidst all his amours and many inconstancies, his heart had never swerved in its love for the "Charmente Gabrielle." His divorce from his wife

Marguerite had for some years been regarded as an event inevitable in the future, and he had promised his lovely mistress that she should be his queen; all her children were legitimated, and but for Sully he would have executed his promise, and might have done so, spite of him, had not death put his veto upon the alliance.

At the end of Lent, in 1599, the king arranged to spend his holidays at Fontainebleau. Gabrielle wished to accompany him, but he, for the sake of appearances, entreated her to return to Paris. She received the order with tears, and Henry, who was more passionately fond of her than ever, was equally affected. Although the separation promised to be of only a few days' duration, they could scarcely tear themselves away from each other. She spoke to the king as though their farewell was to be eternal; she recommended to him her children, and even her domestics.* Again and again they took leave, and again and again some secret emotion drew them to each other's arms. She retired to the house of Zamet, the Italian, a man in whom Henry placed great trust. A day or two afterwards she was suddenly seized with convulsions, of which she died in a few hours in great agony, and so terribly distorted "that hardly anything human was left in her figure." The symptoms indicated poison, and Zamet has been suspected by historians; but his still retaining the favour of the king until the end of his life is a strong argument against this supposition. Upon receiving the news, Henry's grief was almost frantic. The court was put into mourning, and he himself wore violet for many weeks. The stern puritan, D'Aubigné, writing of this unhappy lady, says: "It is a wonder how this woman, whose great beauty had nothing of the loose turn in it, could have lived rather like a queen than a mistress for so many years, and that with so few enemies. The necessities of State were the only enemies she had to encounter." He tells us also that she used with great moderation her power over the king, and that she often gave him good counsel.

The divorce from Marguerite being

* Like all other people of the age (even Sully was not free from the weakness), she profoundly believed in astrology, and was continually surrounded by its professors. Strange to say, their predictions were always sombre, and she would frequently retire from all company to pass whole nights in grief, and in weeping on account of them.

procured, his advisers pressed upon him the necessity of forming another alliance, to give an heir to the crown. Marie de Medicis, daughter of the grand duke of Florence, was the bride selected : —

I was pitched upon [says Sully] to communicate this news to the king, who did not expect the business would have been concluded so suddenly. As soon as I replied to the question whence I came, "We come, sire, from marrying you," he remained for a quarter of an hour as if struck by a thunderbolt. He afterwards walked up and down the chamber, hastily delivering himself up to reflections, with which his mind was so violently agitated that for a long time he could not utter a word. At length, recovering himself like a man who had taken his resolution, "Well," said he, rubbing his hands, "well, *depar Dieu* ! be it so, there is no remedy ; if for the good of my kingdom I must marry, I must." Strange caprice of the human mind ! A prince who had extricated himself with glory and success from a thousand cruel dissensions which war and policy had occasioned, trembled at the very thoughts of domestic quarrels, and seemed more troubled than when, that very year, upon notice sent from a capuchin of Milan, an Italian, who had come to Paris with the intention to poniard him, was seized in the midst of his court.

The marriage was solemnized in the following year (1600). Henry's uneasy presages were fully realized ; but there were faults upon both sides. The insolence of his mistresses exasperated the queen, and constant quarrels and disagreements were the consequence. Nevertheless, the choice which had been made for him was not a happy one. Marie de Medicis was quite unworthy of the great man who had espoused her. The favourite sultana, Mademoiselle d'Entragues, Marchioness de Verneuil, is described as charming in conversation and sprightly of wit : —

The queen's temper [adds Sully] and manners were so different, that the contrast made him still more sensible of those charms in his mistress. "I find nothing of all this at home," said he (the king) to me ; "I receive neither society, amusement, nor content from my wife ; her conversation is unpleasing, her temper harsh ; she never accommodates herself to my humour, nor shares in any of my cares ; when I enter her apartment and offer to approach her with tenderness, or begin to talk familiarly with her, she receives me with so cold and forbidding an air that I quit her in disgust, and am obliged to seek consolation elsewhere.

The diplomatist contrived to bring about a reconciliation, which Madame de Verneuil spared no pains to destroy. In

a moment of infatuation, previous to his second espousals, he had given her a written promise of marriage, which she now showed everywhere, pretending it gave her the right to annul his union with the queen ; she actually found ecclesiastics who supported her absurd claim, and who went so far as to publish the banns of marriage between her and the king. Altogether, the domestic life of the great Henry was not enviable.

In the mean time, thanks to his wisdom and admirable government and that of his ministers, France had not only entirely recovered from her distresses, but had never been so happy and flourishing. Public buildings, palaces, churches, hospitals, were rising everywhere ; ships were built, magazines and arsenals filled, new roads and bridges laid down, oppressive taxes repealed.* The licentiousness of the army was repressed with an iron hand, yet the soldiers were regularly paid, and rewarded in proportion to their services ; the nobles improved their land ; the meanest tradesman enjoyed his profits ; the labourer sowed and reaped in full security, and the king bore out the promise that he had made, that he would make the poorest peasant in his dominions able to eat flesh all the week long, and to put a fowl besides in the pot on Sundays. "God has given me subjects that I may preserve them as my children," he said.

But the sympathies of this great monarch extended far beyond the boundaries of his own possessions, and embraced all the people of Europe. From the time of his accession to the crown he had been constantly revolving in his mind one of the most gigantic political schemes of ancient or modern times—this was no less than the construction of a political system by which all the nations of Europe might be regulated and governed as one great family. The overweening ambition of the house of Austria was at that time a constant menace to the whole civilized world : possessed of Spain, the Netherlands, the Imperial crown of Germany, and a large portion of Italy, besides vast dominions in America, and numerous smaller colonies, its power was colossal. To dismember this monster, to equalize the governments of Europe, reducing them to six hereditary monarchies, France, Spain, Britain, Denmark, Sweden,

* In the course of ten years Sully had reduced the national debt from three hundred and thirty to fifty millions of livres, and during the same period the king had remitted twenty millions of taxes.

and Lombardy; five elective monarchies, the Empire, the Papacy, Poland, Hungary, and Bohemia; four republics, the Venetian, the Italian, the Swiss, and the Belgic, were the main features of the design. There was also to be a general council, formed on the model of the Greek Amphictyons, made up of representatives from all the powers, to discuss the different interests, pacify quarrels, and clear up and determine all civil, political, and religious affairs.

It was anticipated that immense sums of money would be saved by the reduction of the vast armaments kept up by the great powers, that wars would cease, and that all the rulers, united by an indissoluble bond of mutual interest and friendship, would live together like brethren, and visit each other without the trouble of ceremony and without the expense of a train of attendants.* The great supporter—and Sully hints, the first proposer—of this great undertaking was our own Elizabeth,† a sovereign whose genius has perhaps not even yet received due appreciation. Her death checked its execution, for the petty soul of her despicable successor was incapable of receiving so magnificent an idea. The only power to oppose it was Austria, and upon her it was to be enforced by arms. It was for this that Henry was preparing at the time of his assassination. The disinterestedness of the design is proved by the fact that France did not propose to add one rood of land to her territories. Whether, had Henry's life been spared, it could have been carried out, is a question useless to discuss. Nearly three hundred years have elapsed since its proposition, and such a bond of peace and brotherhood appears more Utopian now than then; nay more, there is no nation sufficiently noble and philanthropic to dream of such an undertaking. So much for our boasted advancement, so much for optimism and the perfectibility of the human race!

The queen had never gone through the ceremony of coronation, and she so strenuously urged that it should be celebrated prior to his departure for his great expedition, that the king was obliged to consent, although much against his will. According to all the memoirs

of the time, he was haunted by a strange presentiment of evil in connection with this ceremony.* In an interview with Sully he exclaimed, "Oh, my friend, this coronation does not please me! I know not what is the meaning of it, but my heart tells me some fatal accident will happen. Oh, this cursed coronation! it will be the cause of my death. I shall never go out of this city; they will murder me here." Alarmed by the intense conviction carried in his words, the minister tells us that for three whole days he prayed, entreated, and argued, endeavouring to move the queen from her purpose, but all to no effect; she remained as stubborn as fate. The ceremony was performed on the 13th of May, 1610, but the festivities were not to terminate until the 16th. The next day, being still very restless and uneasy, he proposed to go to the arsenal to see the Duc de Sully.

He could not stay one moment in any place, nor conceal his irresolution and disorder. In the midst of these agitations he said to the queen, "I know not what to do; I have no great inclination to go to the arsenal, because I shall put myself into a passion." She persuaded him not to go. Then he went towards the window, and striking his forehead with his hand, "My God!" said he, "there is something here which strangely troubles me; I know not what is the matter; I cannot go from hence."† (Matthieu.)

With a strange infatuation, he would not allow any guards to attend him, consequently he was followed only by a few gentlemen on horseback and some footmen; by another fatality, he sat with the blinds of the window fully drawn up, thus revealing his exact position to every passer-by. As the coach turned into the Rue Féronnerie, a very narrow thoroughfare, it was met by two carts, and, being unable to pass, was obliged to stop at the corner of the street. In consequence of this block the attendants took another turning, intending to meet the carriage at the end of the street, so that only two footmen followed it, and one of these

* L'Etoile says that an astrologer had long before prophesied to the king that he would be killed in May, 1610, and even foretold the day and the hour.

† There would not be space to even allude to half the dreams and omens which, the *mémoires* of the time inform us, attended Henry's death. Here is one of the most curious: "On the day and hour of his assassination the provost marshal of Piviers, who was playing at *courte boules*, stopped suddenly in the middle of the game and said to those with whom he was playing, 'The king has just been slain.' Upon this being reported he was brought prisoner to Paris: the next day he was found strangled in his cell." These and other incidents would seem to point to an organized conspiracy.

* For a full account of this grand design the reader is referred to the thirtieth book of Sully's "*Mémoires*."

† He says: "If he was not beholden to Elizabeth for the thought of the design, it is, however, certain that this great queen had herself conceived it long before, as a means to revenge Europe for the attempts of its common enemy."

fell back to fasten his garter. Ravaillac, who had followed the coach from the Louvre, perceiving it had stopped and no person was near it, advanced to the side on which the king sat. His cloak wrapped round his left arm concealed the knife he held in his hand, and creeping between the shops and the carriage, as if he were trying to pass, he sprang upon one of the spokes of the wheel, and plunged the knife into the king's side a little above the heart. Henry was at the moment reading a letter to the Duc d'Epéron,* who sat beside him; feeling himself struck, he cried out, "I am wounded!"

At the same instant the assassin repeated the blow with such quickness that not one in the coach had time to oppose it, and then with a sigh the king fell back dead. The murderer made no attempt to escape, and was immediately captured. Upon being put to the question he maintained that he had no accomplices; that he alone had conceived and executed the design upon being told the king was going to make war upon the pope. Under the most exquisite torture, and even upon the scaffold, no other confession could be extorted from him. Nineteen times previously had Henry's life been attempted by papal, Spanish, or Jesuitical tools. Whether Ravaillac was an agent of one of these three moving powers, or whether he was indeed simply a solitary fanatic, seems likely to remain an historical problem. The Jesuits certainly hovered about his dungeon with an anxious assiduity very suspicious. For a very minute narrative and a discussion of evidence, see the last volume of Sully's "*Mémoires*."

When the report of this tragical accident had been spread all over Paris, and it was certainly known that the king, who at first was thought only to be wounded, was actually dead, that mixture of hope and fear which till then had kept this great city in suspense, at once burst forth in loud cries and groans. Some became motionless and insensible through grief; others ran about the streets quite frantic; many embraced their friends without saying anything except "Alas, what a misfortune!" Some shut themselves up in their houses; others threw themselves upon the ground: one might see women, with their hair dishevelled, crying and lamenting; fathers said to their children, "What will become of you, you have lost your father!"

* D'Epéron was suspected of being in league with the assassin, and afterwards underwent a strict examination before the *parlement* of Paris, but, no proof being found against him, he was acquitted. It is well known, however, that he had no liking for the king.

Those who had greater apprehensions for the future, and who remembered the horrible calamities of the late civil wars, deplored the misfortunes of France, and said that the fatal stroke which had pierced the heart of the king at the same time gave a deadly wound to every Frenchman. It was said many were so strongly affected by this event that they died upon the spot, others a few days afterwards. In short, it was not the appearance of a mourning for one single man, but as if the half of all mankind were dead. One would have thought every one had lost all his family, possessions, and hopes by the death of this great king. (Pérefix, "*Histoire de Henri IV.*")

Sully gives us an equally vivid picture of the grief and consternation which this horrible assassination occasioned.

What a contrast these pictures of sorrowful affection present to the hatred with which the Parisians regarded him not twenty years before! Good indeed must have been the prince who could thus have won the hearts of that most fickle people to so warm a love. His character cannot be better portrayed than in the words of that faithful friend and high-minded minister, Sully, who, if at times wanting in breadth of policy, was that rarest phenomenon of his age, *an honest man*, and who by his wisdom and integrity so ably seconded his royal master in the regeneration of France:—

With regard to the qualities of his mind and heart, I shall tell the reader nothing new by saying he was candid, sincere, grateful, compassionate, generous, wise, penetrating. He loved all his subjects as a father, and the whole State as the head of a family; and this disposition it was which recalled him even from the midst of his pleasures to the call of rendering his people happy, and his kingdom flourishing. There were no conditions, employment, or professions to which his reflections did not extend, and that with such clearness and penetration that the changes he projected could not be overthrown by the death of their author, as it but too often happened in this monarchy; his was a mind in which the ideas of what is great, uncommon, and beautiful seemed to rise of themselves. He had drained fens in order to do a greater work than any he had yet undertaken, which was to make by canals a communication from river to river and from sea to sea; he only wanted time to complete this noble project. . . . I should destroy all I have now said of this great prince, if, after having praised him for an infinite number of qualities well worthy to be praised, I did not acknowledge that they were balanced by faults, and those indeed very great. I have not concealed or indeed palliated his passion for women, his excess in gaming, his gentleness often carrying him to

weakness, nor his propensity to every kind of pleasure. I have neither disguised the faults they have made him commit, the foolish expenses they led him into, nor the time they made him waste; but I have likewise observed, to do justice on both sides, that his enemies have greatly exaggerated these errors. If he was, as they say, a slave to women, yet they never regulated his choice of ministers, decided the destinies of his servants, or influenced the deliberations of his council. As much may be said in extenuation of all his other faults. And to sum up all in a word, what he has done is sufficient to show that the good and the bad in his character had no proportion to each other; and since honour and fame had always power enough to tear him from pleasure, we ought to acknowledge them to be his great and real passions.

Even the fanatic excesses of the Revolution showed some respect to his memory, and he remained

Le seul roi dont le peuple ait gardé la mémoire.

From Temple Bar.

HER DEAREST FOE.

CHAPTER I.

"You have been good! very good to me!"

The sounds were slowly, brokenly uttered, as though the mechanism that produced them had well-nigh run down forever.

The speaker lay helplessly back upon his pillow, his grey hair disordered, ashy-pale with the shadow of the great king already on his brow—a somewhat rugged, but not ignoble face—the lines about the mouth, so hard in life, relaxed—the keen, stern eyes dim and dreamy.

The bed on which he lay, the luxuriously-furnished room, the many appliances to relieve pain and assist weakness—all bespoke wealth. At some distance, in a large easy-chair, sat a stout elderly woman, evidently the professional nurse; and beside the bed, holding the sufferer's hand tenderly in both her own, stood a lady, tall, slight, wrapped in a dressing-gown of soft grey, her eyes fixed intently on him, as if gathering up his words, and unconscious of the tears that had welled over and slowly coursed down her cheeks.

"I have loved you very much! I wish I had been less stern, less exacting," he went on with difficulty; "but remember always, I loved"—the voice dropped to

a whisper with the last word, and he closed his eyes.

"You have always been most kind and generous," returned his hearer softly; "you have nothing to reproach yourself with!" and she bent down to kiss his brow.

"I have! I have!" Another long pause, during which he seemed to sleep. Again the poor dim eyes opened.

"Kate! Are you there, Kate?"

"Yes, dear. Here always."

"You will think I have been unjust, that I have done too much for —"

A few moments after he added, "I am sorry, but it is too late —"

"For what?" asked his wife, gently.

The question was never answered.

For nearly an hour he lay silent. The nurse after a while rose and advanced a chair so that the lady might rest without relinquishing the thin, bony, helpless hand that lay in hers; then the door opened to admit the doctor, who, with a whispered word or two to the nurse, and a silent bow to the mistress of the house, took his station at the foot of the bed. Once more the deep-set eyes opened wide with something of their old light, and the dying man breathed out low, but distinctly, the word "Remember!" A few long-drawn sighs, and the watchers listened in vain for the breath that had ceased forever.

The doctor bent over the bed, then uttered, slowly and gently, the words, "It is all over!"

Still the lady did not stir; still she held the cold hand for a few moments longer, then laid it softly down, and stood, her own clasped together, the picture of profound, sad abstraction.

"Call Mrs. Mills," whispered the doctor.

The nurse nodded and left the room, returning almost immediately with a tall, angular-looking, elderly woman, whose air and attire bespoke the housekeeper or confidential maid. She, too, paused, and gazed reverentially on the prostrate form that had been her master; then, passing on to the lady, who still stood motionless, said, in a low but harsh whisper, "Come away, my lamb! come away! You have done all that woman could for him, and you may rest now. Come with me!"

At the evidently familiar sound of the voice the lady turned, and leaning her head against Mills's shoulder, wept bitterly though quietly, trembling all over.

Mills drew her arm through her own,

and with a slight nod to the doctor, repeating, "Come away!" led the wearied mourner out of the room.

After a few directions to the nurse, the doctor too left the chamber of death, and passed out into a large square landing, well warmed and lighted, upon which various doors opened. He descended the stairs and went into the dining-room.

A well-dressed man, probably a gentleman, was slowly pacing to and fro, and stood suddenly still face to face with the doctor. He was slightly above middle height, with sloping shoulders. Tolerably regular features, glittering, anxious eyes, and abundant, well-trained hair and whiskers, made up what their owner considered a decidedly good-looking whole. "Well," he said, with a sort of effort and a nervous twitching of the lip; "Well?"

"Our poor friend is at rest," replied the other; "passed away very tranquilly—nature quite exhausted." He stepped to the fireplace as he spoke, and rang the bell.

"And she is?" resumed the first speaker, in a curious broken voice, catching his words abruptly. He stopped an instant, then continued more quietly: "Mrs. Travers? is she—" He paused again.

"Tolerably calm! sensible woman. Still I must write a little prescription for her. Nerves are not made of iron. She has really had great fatigue, and— Oh, Edwards!" to a staid, elderly man-servant who answered the bell, "I want some writing-materials; and, Edwards, I think I must ask you to give Mr. Ford and myself a glass of wine."

"Yes, sir, certainly," replied Edwards. He proceeded to set forth the desired refreshment with alacrity, and then went in search of the writing-materials.

"Not for me," said Mr. Ford, rejecting the glass offered him, with upturned hand; "it would choke me."

"Nonsense!" said the doctor, a cheery, chirrupy little man; "it will keep out the cold and the fog. I am glad you are here, Mr. Ford. You will perhaps be so good as to see Mr. Wall this evening, give him my compliments, and say I will see to the registry, as I was present at our poor friend's death. You and he, of course, know who to write to; but it seems to me that the widow is terribly alone. Some female relative, now, to stay with her; but I am perhaps going out of my proper sphere to offer any suggestion. Ah, thank you, thank you, that will do nicely"—this to the servant—

and the little man began to scrawl hastily over the paper placed before him.

"You are right, sir," said Mr. Ford, drawing a chair to the table, and smoothing back his hair slowly and reflectively. "She, I mean Mrs. Travers, stands singularly, sadly alone. I may say that, although but a humble individual, I am her oldest, almost her only friend."

"Dear me! Indeed, indeed," returned the doctor, absently, as he read over his prescription and again rang the bell. "Here, Edwards, will you send this round to the surgery at once—at once, Edwards?"

"Yes, sir," and the man retired.

"You were saying?" observed the doctor interrogatively, as he placed himself on the hearth-rug.

"We were speaking of Mrs. Travers," resumed Ford. "She has been kept singularly apart from her former friends; and there is no one now, save myself, who knew her in her early days. I knew her dear mother also, and all the circumstances—that is— Perhaps, under the circumstances, she might like to see me before I return to town?"

"What! this evening! now?" asked the doctor in evident surprise. Well, you know best. You might inquire."

But the doctor's tone seemed to steady Mr. Ford's nerves, and recall him to himself.

"No, no," he returned; "not now, of course; in a few days, no doubt, she will send for me; in the mean time, my best efforts will be directed to arrange everything so as to cause as little trouble to the executors as possible."

"I fancy there is a large real and personal estate, eh?"

"Tolerable—tolerable, sir," returned Mr. Ford, rubbing his hands over each other, with an air of superior information.

"Well, you will lose no time in communicating with Mr. Wall," said the doctor; "and," glancing at the clock, "you will just catch the 7.30 train if you start at once. Have a glass of wine before you go? Do."

"Not a drop!" returned Mr. Ford with stern resolution.

A few more words and he sallied forth, holding down his umbrella against the driving rain of a December evening, to make his way to the station, which was fortunately close at hand.

Three days after, the following formed one of the entries in that column which is supposed to possess so deep an in-

terest for the female readers of the *Times* :—

"On the 12th instant, at Hampton Court, aged sixty-three, Richard Travers, Esq., of St. Hilda's Place, E. C., and Hereford Square, Tyburnia."

This announcement caused some gossip at Lloyd's, the Jerusalem, and even among Dick, Tom, and Harry at the luncheon-bars in the neighbourhood of St. Hilda's Place.

"So Travers is dead," was observed among the underwriters. "What will become of the business?"

"Is there no one to take it up?"

"Capital East-Indian connection."

"Not a bad trade with the Cape."

"Left no son?"

"No; married late—a foolish marriage. Some country girl, they say."

"Who is heir?"

"Has none, I believe."

"Ford, his manager, is a shrewd, steady fellow; he might keep the business together," etc., etc.

While over the luncheon-bar the dashing young clerks at Travers's were condoled with on the possible "shutting up" of the "concern," and questioned as to how much "the governor" was probably worth. "Travers & Co.," though a somewhat old-fashioned house, not working any of your globe-girdling speculative gigantic operations, was much respected, and looked upon as being safe as the Bank, and considerably safer than a joint-stock bank.

All persons belonging to "Travers & Co." had a well-to-do, not to say gentlemanlike air, and generally speaking, were prosperous.

And now the inevitable vulgarities of every-day life must tread close after, in the very footprints of the mighty, irresistible king.

Whispers of inexorable business penetrate the quiet chamber where the lonely young widow sits and broods over the strange, sad, and yet not utterly unwelcome liberty that has come to her. She must not appear until clothed in the sable garments suited to her state. She has neither father, mother, brother, relative of any degree at hand to act for her; and so, when a card, bearing the inscription "Mr. W. Wall," is brought to her, late the second day after her husband's death, she observes to her maid, "I must see him, Mills, of course," and, rising wearily, moves to the door.

"Mr. Ford is below, and wants to know if you will see *him*?"

"Indeed I cannot. I am very much obliged to him for all his kind thought and interest, but Mr. Wall will do all I want at present. Tell Mr. Ford I will see him in a few days; show Mr. Wall up to the drawing-room."

The lawyer, a tall, thin, close-lipped man, grey and angular with advancing years, was but slightly acquainted with his friend and client's wife.

He had long known and respected the deceased, whose marriage had sorely disappointed and chafed him. It was with a sort of resentful reluctance he presented himself to the designing syren who had entrapped and bamboozled poor Travers, and induced him to leave the whole of his handsome fortune away from his own relations and natural heir.

Yet even he was insensibly mollified by the half-stately, half-subdued air of the objectionable widow.

"Thank you for coming to me so soon, Mr. Wall," she said, holding out her hand frankly to him. "I wanted to see you so much, and yet I seemed too dull to know how to send."

"While I rather hesitated lest I should be intruding too soon," replied the lawyer. "But there is much to be done and thought of; and not knowing any friend or relative more intimate with you than myself—" He paused abruptly, feeling he was on delicate ground.

"Exactly," said Mrs. Travers. The low, clear voice, though very soft, had in it a certain finish, a musical completeness of intonation which generally secured attention, and Mr. Wall listened intently as she tranquilly piloted him out of his difficulty.

"I *am* singularly alone; so, even if you do not like me very much"—a sweet smile, sad, not unamused, but perfectly frank, and free from the smallest tinge of deprecation—"act as if you did, for the present."

"My dear madam—"

"There, there! I am quite sure you will be a considerate and conscientious adviser, and help me to fulfil, even to the smallest minutiae, the wishes of—of him whom we have lost." She hesitated, and her voice trembled as she alluded to her husband, and then she remained silent till she could recover herself.

"I shall be most happy to assist you to the utmost of my power," said Mr. Wall more cordially than he had yet spoken. "I have a will executed by your late husband about four years ago; are you aware that he has made any

other? I find from Mr. Ford there is some idea abroad that he has; if so, it is most strange that we knew nothing of it. He always consulted us in all matters—especially myself.”

“I think he has; I think he has,” returned Mrs. Travers thoughtfully. She had seated herself on a sofa, and, resting her elbow on the pillow, leaned her cheek upon her hand.

“You think he has!” repeated the lawyer much surprised.

“I can only so understand his last words to me,” continued his client. “He said he hoped I would not think he had done too much for — Then he stopped, and never uttered the name. Now I immediately fancied he meant his cousin Hugh, for I know when he made the will to which you allude, he was terribly irritated against him, and therefore far from being just. I have often made Mr. Travers angry by urging this upon him, and entreating him to make a fairer distribution of his property. But I always imagined he resented my interference too much to follow my suggestions, though he loved me well. Where shall I find such a friend as he was!”

She covered her face to hide the tears that would come.

“Certainly his words point to another will,” resumed Mr. Wall after a moment’s respectful silence. “Yet I cannot but consider it most improbable. However, it is our duty to make every search.”

“What reason did Mr. Ford give for supposing there was another will?” asked Mrs. Travers.

“I really did not ask him. He mentioned it only just now as we were waiting together in the dining-room. He seems an excellent man, full of zeal for his late employer, and rightly so; a better master, a more honourable gentleman never existed.”

The solemn panegyric, though stiffly, was not unkindly said. Mrs. Travers held out her hand silently and gratefully to him; he bowed over it, and went on:

“Ford is a keen man of business, and thoroughly understands the management of the house. When you feel equal to see him, you will find him useful in many ways.”

“I have no doubt I shall,” replied Mrs. Travers carelessly. “But, in the meantime, will you, my dear sir, see and ascertain from him what has been said or reported about the will. We may get some clue to guide our search, and there is no

use in looking at the will you have until we feel sure there is no other.”

After receiving Mrs. Travers’s directions respecting the funeral and some minor matters, the lawyer returned to the dining-room, considerably mollified towards his late client’s widow, though it would have puzzled him to give a reason for the subtle change. Probably the simple, straightforward sincerity of her tone, the evident effort to suppress rather than display a grief unmistakably real, these symptoms so widely different from the “drowned in woe” aspect he expected from the designing minx who had entrapped his friend, blunted his suspicions in spite of himself, though he was half ashamed to feel them slipping from him.

The dining-room was unoccupied when the lawyer entered, and looking round he passed into a smaller room which opened upon the garden, and had been used by the late master of the house as a morning-room or study. Here Mr. Wall found the man he sought, who, standing with his back to the door, was so occupied in examining a water-colour sketch of Mrs. Travers, which, though unfinished was remarkably like, that he did not hear the lawyer’s approach, and started when he addressed him.

“I was afraid you had gone, Mr. Ford. I want particularly to speak to you.”

“I am quite at your service—and,” with a slight, almost imperceptible catch or hesitation, “I thought it possible Mrs. Travers might wish to see me. I have had the honour of being on such confidential terms with our late excellent friend, and having been fortunate in doing Mrs. Travers herself some little service—”

“Just so,” interrupted the lawyer blandly. “She has just now begged me to express her consciousness of your zeal and merit, and a—hopes to tell you the same herself when equal to receive any one.”

Mr. Ford bowed in silence; so that Mr. Wall did not notice his expression. He also passed his handkerchief across his brow, as if warm or oppressed, and then rubbed his hands over each other with a nervous pressure; meantime, Mr. Wall proceeded:

“We are very desirous of ascertaining if Mr. Travers has made any disposition subsequent to the will executed in ’54. May I ask what are the rumours you have heard on the subject?”

“Only this, that yesterday, one of our

clerks, Poole, who used to come to and fro with papers and cheques to our late worthy principal after his first attack last spring — Poole said, 'He did not make that will much too soon.' I naturally asked what will he alluded to, and he told me that some months ago, Mr. Travers sent for him, and when he went into the private room, he found Gregory with Mr. Travers. Gregory was our cashier; you may remember he took a holiday last summer, the first for twenty years — went to the seaside and caught fever, which carried him off. We had a move in consequence, and you recommended young Pierson for —"

"I remember it well! Pray go on."

"Well, Poole and Gregory witnessed Mr. Travers's signature to what Poole understood to be his will — of the purport he was, of course, ignorant."

"Ha!" ejaculated Mr. Wall, and stood a moment or two in deep thought. "This is very decisive indeed. Yet it seems almost incredible to me that he should have kept such a matter from Mrs. Travers and myself! However, all that now remains is for us to make a careful examination of all papers, etc. Is it not strange this man Poole never gave any previous hints?"

"I think not," returned Ford. "The young men in Mr. Travers's employ were considerably afraid of him, and as Poole seemed to think there was no secret in the occurrence, he was the less likely to talk about it."

"True," said Mr. Wall, and paused as if considering the subject; then repeated the word "True. I will see Mrs. Travers again. It is only four o'clock. Nothing can be done until we know who is to administer to the estate; the sooner we commence our search the better. I will just step up to Mrs. Travers, and return to you immediately." So saying, the methodical lawyer left Mr. Ford to his reflections, which seemed to be of a chequered hue. First, he returned to his contemplation of Mrs. Travers's picture; once or twice he pressed his hands together with a sort of nervous tension, holding his head now to this side and now to that, so as to catch the different lights thrown by the lamp which Edwards had brought.

"Yes, yes," he whispered to himself with a smile — a not unkindly smile, yet with an undefinable tinge of malignity in it, a sort of anticipative triumph. "It is his turn to-day — mine will come."

"Mrs. Travers is quite willing we

should commence our examination at once; but doubts that such a document is among the papers here. Are you aware that Mr. Travers kept any at his office? Indeed, I suppose he was scarcely there since the period this man Poole mentions."

"Oh yes, he was. He attended to business with much regularity all last spring and part of the summer."

"Well, Mr. Ford, let us begin. Here are the keys of this *escritoire*."

For more than two hours did the two men of business seek carefully and systematically amid the papers and documents contained in a tin box or two, in an old brass-bound writing-desk, in all imaginable places — but in vain; and, after partaking of refreshment, they departed baffled and silent.

While Mrs. Travers sits wrapped in thought over the fire in her dressing-room, unable either to form any defined plan, or even speculate on her own future, and a subdued note of solemn preparation vibrates through the household, let us put some of the memories which crowd the young widow's mind into a tangible form, and supply a key to the position.

CHAPTER II.

ABOUT sixteen or seventeen years before the date of this chapter, a certain kindly, scholarly, elderly clergyman named Lee was perpetual curate of the pretty parish we shall call Cullingford.

Though not remote, it was retired and unknown save to experienced anglers, for the trout-fishing in its neighbourhood was excellent.

The Rev. William Lee was a small celebrity in his way. He had for many years eked out a very insufficient income by preparing young gentlemen for the army, navy, and the universities.

It was before competitive examinations had been invented; still some preparation was necessary.

Mr. Lee's young gentlemen did not do badly, so his school prospered; and the village, with the fields and woodlands round about, were the more cheerful for the sunny, healthy young life constantly overflowing the boundaries of the parsonage.

Mr. Lee had been early left a widower with one son — his idol — and a costly idol.

This special worship, and a general tendency not to turn away from those that would borrow of him, prevented the

good curate's earnings from remaining in that concrete condition favourable to ease of circumstances. Still he had enough, and thought his lot a fair one, until his son, "his only son," was cut off by a few hours of cholera in India, leaving a little delicate orphan baby girl, first to plague and then to delight her desolate grandfather.

The nearest dwelling to the parsonage was a very humble cottage, originally not much beyond a gamekeeper's or gardener's lodge in size and style, but bearing the outward and visible signs of its inmates in the refined prettiness of its bit of pleasure-ground, in the dainty drapery of its muslin curtains, and in the carefully trained roses and honeysuckle which made its porch in summer-time all blossom and perfume. Holmewood Cottage had, about this time, been tenanted for nearly two years by a lady with one little girl—the widow, so it was understood in the village, of young Reginald Lee's dearest friend, who had stood by his death-bed, and sent the sad tidings to the bereaved father. At any rate, the curate was for long the widow's only friend, nearly her only acquaintance. She was a fair, soft, sad-looking woman, with weak health and shattered nerves; her one tie to life a bright-eyed, brown-haired, active, restless, joyous little girl of five or six, with a sweet smile and a laugh full of glee, that soon wound herself round both the curate and his stern housekeeper, and was the spoiled pet of even the most cynical girl-hater among the curate's young gentlemen.

It is a strong temptation to pause and hold up some pictures of those happy days of young life among the bowery lanes and shady woodlands, by the merry cricket-ground, the fresh uplands, and especially by the glorious trout-streams for which the neighbourhood was famous; to describe the peace, the dreaminess, the silent thought-progress, the gradual unfolding of ambition to know, to see, to leave the happy valley and try the eddies and currents of the great, dreadful, beautiful, beckoning world beyond. But it must be resisted.

None save Mr. Lee knew how scanty were the widow's resources, and with benevolent alacrity he did his very best to assist the education of her daughter. But the time came when she must be sent to school. This separation seemed to rend the mother's life. Then came a series of partings—for the widow was sure to be seriously ill when Katie had

been away a few months—and the child was sent for in haste. Her presence then wrought a cure, and the process was repeated.

Now this was a trial to Katie; she was ambitious, and passionately fond of study, but the tender, protecting love inspired by her gentle, timid mother enabled her to bear this and many other small worries arising from the same cause with the quiet submission of strength. Mrs. Aylmer had been, and still was, a delicately pretty woman, refined to weakness, more by nature than by training, for she was the daughter of a respectable tradesman, who had left her and her brothers fairly well off. Her grace and beauty, unfortunately for herself, attracted the admiration and affection of a handsome, pleasant, well-born, but reckless young officer, who seemed to her the embodiment of all her fancy had ever painted. Difficulties and opposition only served to add fire and resolution to the lover's originally slight admiration, and at length he persuaded her to run away with him. The marriage being equally objectionable to the relatives on both sides, the erring couple were solemnly and effectively renounced; the young husband exchanged into a regiment under orders for India, and he and his plebeian bride vanished from the respectable and aristocratic circles to which they respectively belonged.

After a few years of chequered happiness, the lieutenant, having squandered more than all he possessed, fell a victim to climate and too much "brandy pawnee," leaving his widow alone in the world, with her baby, and a lieutenant's widow's pension to exist upon. To her, of course, he was a hero, towards whom fate and fortune were adverse; but Katie, whose mind was inquisitive and exceedingly common-sensible, in spite of its streaks of poetry and an ardent love of the beautiful, used sometimes, even when she listened to her mother's loving reminiscences, stroking her hand the while tenderly, to reflect that, were she a man, with the smallest opening wherein to insert the point of the wedge, it would go hard but she would force some favour from fortune.

It was during Katie's absence at a school in Germany, to which her mother had with infinite grief permitted her to go for a few months, that Mrs. Aylmer received an advantageous proposition from a cousin, the only member of her family who recognised her existence. Mr. Hicks, the aforesaid cousin, was the proprietor of a

far-famed establishment for the sale of "fishing-tackle" in all varieties, including flies for all seasons and quarters. He was largely patronized by the disciples of the rod who are to be found in the precincts of the city where his shop was situated, and was a prosperous, kindly soul, innocent of malice, and regardless of the letter "h."

This fishing-tackle cousin wrote to ask Mrs. Aylmer if she would be disposed to accommodate a "most desirable party" for a few weeks occasionally; the said "party" being an elderly "gentleman" who had been recommended to try change and amusement for his health. The only change he could invent was fishing. He had been used to go down to the North, but not feeling equal to the distance, had called at Mr. Hicks's place, and asked him to recommend some quarters within an easy distance of town. Whereupon Cousin Hicks bethought him of the trout-fishing reputation of Cullingford, and of throwing a chance in the widow's way. Mrs. Aylmer took counsel with the curate, and accepted the proposal.

The little woman was ravenous to make and save money, for that meant helping Kate, and keeping Kate at home. The respectable party paid well, and staid longer than he at first intended.

The widow made him very comfortable, and was the more successful because the respectable party was undoubtedly a gentleman.

He was, in short, Mr. Travers, head of the well-known house of Travers & Co., St. Hilda's Place, E. C.

Cullingford agreed with him. He came there frequently, sometimes not in the fishing season. He, after the first year, rented his two rooms permanently, and his managing clerk was quite well known on the line between G—— and Cullingford, as he went to and fro with his black bag at such times; for, with all its rural, quiet, remote style of beauty, Cullingford was but two hours from London.

This was the addition which Kate found on her return from Germany. She was inclined to resent such an intrusion. Home was not home, with a stranger installed in the best rooms, and demanding her mother's first attention. But she soon became reconciled.

Mr. Travers was the most unobtrusive of men, though not without a certain dignity in his carriage and manners; and when Kate had occasion to see and speak with him, her mother being disabled by a nervous headache, she was considerably

struck by the sort of grave chivalrous respect with which he treated her.

Gradually it grew to be a custom with him to pause a while on his way out and in, and hold some conversation with his landlady's daughter as she tied up the flowers or took off dead leaves. He did not say much, but that little proved him a gentleman of some cultivation, and then — he listened remarkably well.

Sometimes he brought Kate some new and charming books from town — not novels; these he disapproved as much as Kate loved.

He never appeared to care for Mr. Lee's acquaintance, and indeed the curate was too much occupied in his pastoral and tutorial avocations to spare the time for its prosecution.

So two years slipped away peacefully. At the end of that time Kate paid a visit to the German school where she had spent eight or nine months, and where she had formed a close friendship with the daughters of the principal. She hoped to have made an arrangement by which her young friend Fanny Lee, now emerging from childhood, should enjoy the advantages of a complete plunge into a foreign language; but all her plans and projects were nipped in the bud.

Scarcely a month after Kate's arrival at Schlungenstein, a bad type of low fever broke out in Cullingford, where sanitary science was at that time unknown, and one of the first sufferers was Mrs. Aylmer. Kate was at once recalled, and came right willingly, though not very seriously alarmed — "the dearest mother" generally got ill when she was away, and recovered when she returned, and so it would be now.

It was not so, however; the fever was conquered, but the tender, timid, childlike mother died of the prostration which ensued. And then Kate knew how she loved her, and what desolation meant.

The day after the funeral, as Kate sat in all the unspeakable dreariness of the time when one's occupation's o'er, and the possibility of a new one has not suggested itself — when the reaction after protracted hope and fear and strained watching has set in, and makes life colourless, aimless, tasteless — she was startled by the announcement that Mr. Travers was at the door, and would like much to see her. She had nearly forgotten his existence; nevertheless she felt comforted by the idea that he thought of her, so he came in — came in more hastily, with less rigid composure

than she had ever seen before. He evidently felt for her. She put her cold hand into his silently.

"My dear young lady," said Mr. Travers—and his voice, which had always pleased her, sounded unusually soft—"I have but this moment heard of your bereavement. I came down as usual, little thinking of the change which has occurred. I shall not, of course, intrude upon you; but if you can see me to-morrow, I should like to know your plans, if possible to assist you."

Very little passed then. Travers carried away with him a keen impression of the bravery with which Kate struggled for composure, and suppressed rather than exaggerated her grief. He talked with kindly, sensible interest to her the next day; and the third, in a friendly and frank manner, suggested a solution of all doubts and difficulties by a marriage with himself.

Kate was astounded; but she was heartwhole and no sentimentalist. Mr. Travers was well-preserved, well-bred, and did not look quite thirty years older than herself. The world was strange and desolate to her; gratitude warmed her feelings towards him, and she consented.

The marriage was solemnized with unbecoming speed, so the people of Cullingford said; but, as Mr. Travers urged, Kate had no home to leave, and the sooner she was in one of her own the better. To this her only friend Mr. Lee agreed. Something he distantly hinted, respecting settlements, was met with a haughty "Rest assured, sir, I shall not leave my wife unprotected for," which silenced the good man. Two days after, Kate Aylmer was transformed into Mrs. Travers, and carried away from the sweet, humble, happy home of her girlhood forever. Mr. Travers evidently wished to cut off all connection with her former life, and correspondence with Fanny Lee, though not forbidden, was discouraged.

Nearly three years after the marriage, old Mr. Lee died, and poor Fanny was left unprotected for.

Kate's lot had its angles; but, rough or smooth, it did not last in this stage. At the close of her third year of marriage, Mr. Travers caught a severe cold, an attack of bronchitis ensued, from which he partially recovered. He was ordered out of town, and not wishing to be far from his business, in the pursuit of which he had been keener than ever of late, he took a house at Hampton.

Feeling better at first, he relaxed some invalid precautions, caught a second and severer cold, to which he succumbed; and Kate was again alone, though scarce so desolate as when her mother died.

The will, which had been deposited in Mr. Wall's hands soon after the receipt of an ill-judged letter from the man who had hoped to be his heir, written in reply to Mr. Travers's announcement of his marriage, was short, simple, and to most widows would have been satisfactory.

After a legacy of five hundred pounds to his chief clerk, and a few smaller bequests to an old pensioner or two and a superannuated servant, the testator's beloved wife was constituted residuary legatee and executrix in conjunction with an old City friend; no directions or wishes as to the winding-up or continuance of his business was expressed—everything was unreservedly left to the young, childless widow.

It was this will that Mrs. Travers strongly believed had been superseded by a later testament or codicil.

CHAPTER III.

BUT the search for the will was fruitless; every probable and improbable corner was ransacked in vain, to the grief of Mrs. Travers, and the ill-concealed annoyance of her solicitor.

Mr. Wall was convinced that his late client must have destroyed his second will, as, on inquiry, there appeared no doubt that he had made one; while Mrs. Travers was equally convinced he had not, and worked herself almost into a fever by fretting and conjecturing on the subject.

The last melancholy ceremonies had been performed. The windows were once more opened to the light, and the scarce interrupted current of every-day life flowed on as before, its crowd of common things rapidly closing up the gap, so that even the truest, deepest mourners wonder at the marvellous and often merciful operation of inevitable routine—the force that lies in the "strong necessity of living."

Kate Travers never attempted to persuade herself or others that she was broken-hearted, yet she thought much and sadly of her dead husband. He had loved her truly; but even to himself his love had been more a source of pain than pleasure. He had believed that a calm and fatherly tenderness would have tempered the warmth of conjugal affection,

and have fitted him peculiarly to be the guide and guardian of the bright girl who accepted his proposal with such frank gratitude. He did not reckon on the spell which her individuality, and an undefined consciousness of the latent wealth of love he had not the power to draw forth, cast over him to torment and to fascinate. Before he was six months a husband he loved her with an exacting passion which was at once the misery and delight of his existence. He hated himself for the difference of their age; he would have sacrificed his all without hesitation for her sake; yet he resented the slightest liberty of action, lest it might be the result of indifference; and was so ravenous for proofs of her affection that, when they came, the sweet incense was all evaporated in the self-torturing tests on which his eagerness to prove its purity insisted. While she, discerning things more from sympathy than deliberate observation, was slow to understand him.

At first, while mourning the loss of a cherished mother, whose helplessness had only endeared her the more, she clung gratefully and tenderly to him, and he was satisfied; but her sunny nature re-asserted itself, and her girlish pleasure in rich and becoming dress, the new enjoyment of driving in her own carriage—as she soon ceased to call it—and her openly expressed delight in wearing the handsome ornaments Mr. Travers bestowed upon her, opened up a hundred sources of offence. Her vivid enjoyment of books and music and painting converted these innocent objects of interest into hated rivals, and Kate never could get rid of the impression that she was in a golden cage; that, however the imprisoning wires might be jewelled and adorned, they were still there. Her good temper, grateful, easy nature, and ready tact, always prevented any open collision, save on the occasion when Mr. Travers opened a letter addressed to his wife, in which her old friend, Fanny Lee, warmly thanked her for a very opportune present of money when she had been left in sore poverty by her grandfather's death, nearly a year before our story opens; this acknowledgment, and an evident allusion to some expressions of regret from Mrs. Travers that she had lost sight of so valued a friend as old Mr. Lee, were construed by the jealous husband into evidence of his wife's preference of her past life, and a tendency to underhand dealing. In vain she ex-

plained that, having abundance of pocket-money, she thought she might dispose of some of it without troubling him on the subject. He was for some time unappeasable. A severe attack of illness occurring soon after, Mrs. Travers was glad to let the subject drop, and she gradually but very slowly regained her ascendancy. At first, with fearlessness of a heart secure in its own honesty and singleness of purpose, Mrs. Travers tried to wean her husband from his morbid greed for her society—for her every look, and word, and thought, and to brighten this engrossing jealousy into pleasant, friendly, sympathetic intercourse. But, finding herself misunderstood in every attempt at a better and healthier tone, she lost heart, and gradually subsided into an adored captive. She was young, and but partially developed; as yet she knew neither her own strength or weakness. But four years of marriage, and constant companionship with a man of cultivated though somewhat narrow mind, had greatly matured her intellect, and the last year being much thrown on herself both in matters of action and judgment, she began to feel that she might stand alone.

Now, even under her sincere sorrow, in which the principal ingredient was regret that the departed, with all the materials of happiness about him, had gone down to the grave under the same dull shadow in which he had lived; even under her tender grief was a sweet consciousness that, however gloomily shrouded, liberty had come to her at last. Still it was very strange, that sensation of being quite mistress of the roomy, comfortable house in which she was domiciled; of having the full command of the stately and well-bred man out of livery who presided over the plate and glass; of being really at home in her house, albeit but a ready-furnished one taken by the year, in order that Mr. Travers might enjoy pure air within an easy distance of his office. It was too strange to be pleasant yet. And then how she shrank from the look of her own face in her widow's cap! From no want of respect to the departed, she longed to throw it off; it was so unnatural, so oppressive!

She sat thinking dreamily of these things about a week after the funeral, on one of the first days of the new year. How rapidly and vividly the panorama of the past floated through her mind, and how changed was everything!

"I wish I had a nice, kind, gentleman-like uncle or cousin! — a man is so useful. How lonely I am! I have lost my old friends, and made no new ones. Well, I shall never return to that dreary house in Hereford Square. I was wretched there! I will let it, or sell it, *if* I have the power! How that "if" meets me everywhere! I wish the real will could be found. I can never feel settled until it is. I am so sure it was made after our last conversation about Hugh Galbraith, when Mr. Travers seemed so offended at my persisting that his first will was unjust! It was so like him to act upon my suggestion afterwards, and yet conceal the act! Ah! with so much knowledge and real nobility of nature in many ways, how was it that he missed the true wisdom of frankness and trustfulness? I must find Fanny Lee; I might help her, and if she turns out anything like what I remember, she could live with me." Thinking thus dreamily, Mrs. Travers lay back in a luxurious easy-chair imported from their town house, near a glowing, blazing fire. The drawing-room where she had once more established herself was a large and pleasant apartment, well filled with a mixture of old-fashioned and modern furniture. The mirrors, the chintz curtains, the larger tables, and the cabinets, were almost antique in style and pattern. Although mid-winter, the *jardinières* were not neglected; beaths, ferns, and chrysanthemums lent colour enough to be agreeable. A grand piano filled up the farther end of the room; and a pretty, fanciful, but useful writing-table stood near enough to the fire for warmth and to the window for light. A look of comfort and good taste pervaded the whole.

After a few moments more of reverie, a brighter and more decided expression stole over Mrs. Travers's features. She rang, and, rising, walked slowly towards one of the windows; a pretty garden sloped to the river, now denuded of summer adornments, and while she gazed upon without seeing it, the grave "man out of livery" opened the door.

"You rang, if you please, ma'am."

"Oh, yes. I want the directory, Edwards."

When it was brought, Mrs. Travers sat down to her writing-table, and looked earnestly through its pages, apparently in vain. But she was interrupted. Again the door opened, Edwards appeared, salver in hand, and presented a card to his mistress.

"Mr. Ford? Show him up." She left the writing-table, and stood ready to receive him.

Mr. Ford was a man made up of negatives; he was neither young nor old, plain nor handsome, tall nor short, gentlemanlike nor caddish. He had fine large dark eyes, rather restless in expression, very thick black whiskers faintly powdered with grey, a large, loose-looking mouth, and a smile not unkindly nor yet quite free from a tinge of malignity. He was accurately dressed in slight mourning.

"How do you do, Mr. Ford?" said Mrs. Travers, holding out her hand with a smile — a very kind but pensive smile. "I am glad to see you."

Mr. Ford took the hand, and bowed over it in silence.

"I was so sorry Edwards did not let me know when you called last Tuesday," she continued, to give him time, seeing that from some cause he was agitated. "I should certainly have seen you."

"You are very kind," said Mr. Ford, at length, clearing his throat nervously, and looking up without absolutely meeting Mrs. Travers's eyes. "I ventured to hope that for various reasons you would have received me."

"Come near the fire," was Mrs. Travers's reply; "though so bright, it is very cold." She resumed her seat, and Ford placed himself near her.

"I almost feared to see you, dreading to find sad traces of your long watch," he continued; "but I rejoice to find you looking better than I expected."

"I feel very strange, and sad, and puzzled, but not ill. Oh! Mr. Ford, I have been quite longing to talk to you. You were so much in poor Mr. Travers's confidence; you knew us all so well before I was married, that you can tell me more than any one else."

Mr. Ford coloured slightly, and drew his chair a possible inch nearer to the widow.

"My dear Mrs. Travers, need I say how heartily I am at your service? I — a —" He hesitated, and stopped abruptly.

"Oh, I feel quite sure of your loyalty to me," she returned with a frank, unhesitating, but slightly indifferent acceptance of his assurances not exactly flattering. "Now, tell me, what do you think about this will? I think it is simply mislaid. I feel sure Mr. Travers made one in accordance with my wishes, but I never can believe he destroyed it."

"It is impossible to say. The most excellent of men are liable to strange whims, sometimes much more unpleasant whims than leaving all their property to a charming lady like your good self."

A faint tendency to frown appeared in Mrs. Travers's distinct though delicate eyebrows; but she only said, "Then you think he did destroy the will Poole witnessed?"

"I cannot come to any decision in my own mind on the subject. I only know that every possible depository for such a document has been most carefully examined, and not a trace of it is to be found. Even if it exists I do not now think it will be discovered, and indeed I incline to believe it cannot exist."

"It is most unfortunate," said Mrs. Travers, leaning her elbow on the arm of her chair, and resting her cheek on her hand, while her deep blue eyes grew larger and darker with earnest thought as she gazed at the fire—not more earnestly than Ford gazed at her, now her eyes were turned away. "Most unfortunate," she went on slowly, as if speaking to herself. "I do not know what to do or how to act. I feel certain Mr. Travers wished to provide properly for Sir Hugh Gilbraith, and now, when I suggest a division of the property with him, Mr. Wall says, 'My dear madam, you must just wait.' When I suggest that your five hundred pounds should be paid to you, 'I must just wait;' and when I say I should like to go away somewhere to shake off the sort of oppression that hangs upon me, I am met with the same impressive, 'I would not advise you to stir under the circumstances; you must just wait.'" She pushed back her chair slightly, as if warmed by her own impatience.

"And very sound advice too," said Ford, with a smile at once admiring and superior. "There really is nothing for it but patience. If the will does not turn up within a week or two we may conclude it has been destroyed, and act upon the original one. Fortunately, there is nothing pressing; things can go on for a while as they are. Even should the missing document be found, we may well believe that the bulk of the property and all authority will be with you—at least I suppose you have no reason to doubt this?"

The last words were uttered with a kind of insinuating curiosity, while the speaker, resting his arms on his knees, bent forward to look very keenly at his companion.

"No, I suppose not," she returned carelessly; and then added, with much feeling, "I know *he* would have been guided in all things by a partiality beyond what I deserved, by a kindly consideration that never deviated —"

"What!" interrupted Mr. Ford, rising abruptly, and walking to the window; then, turning again, he repeated, "never deviated! Do I not well remember one evening in Hereford Square, not long before you came to this very house, the pain, the grief, the indignation with which I overheard words addressed to you as I waited in the front drawing-room, words which should never have been addressed to a creature so gentle, so devoted, so —"

"Hush! hush! Mr. Ford," cried Mrs. Travers, imperiously. "I always feared you had overheard those unhappy remarks, and, not knowing what led up to them, would exaggerate their meaning. It was an affair in which I now believe I was wrong. So good a husband had a right to my fullest confidence in everything."

"Even in so slight a matter as a small gift to a young girl friend, whose feelings you would have spared the —"

"You know more than I thought," interrupted Mrs. Travers, in her turn, and looking full and more sternly at him than her soft eyes seemed capable of looking a moment before. "But whatever opinion you may have formed, I beg you will forget the whole thing; at any rate, never name it to me."

Mr. Ford coloured and bit his lip. "I see I have offended. You must excuse me if I sometimes lose my self-command. When I remember old times, your dear respected mother, who always extended so kind a welcome to me; the sweet cottage, which seemed to me at one time an earthly paradise —" He again stopped and turned away, passing his handkerchief over his face. Mrs. Travers looked at him with a slightly wondering expression, and a vague, uncomfortable desire that he would take his departure arose in her mind.

"They were very happy, those old days," said she, soothingly, after a moment's pause; "but I hope there are many bright and prosperous ones before you yet, Mr. Ford. I am sure, if I can in any way assist your fortunes, I should not only please myself, but best fulfil my husband's good intentions; he had, I am sure, a sincere regard for you."

Mr. Ford made a gesture as if of repu-

diating all worldly advantages which might accrue from the Travers connection.

"By the way," continued the young widow, "talking of poor dear Cullingford and old times reminds me I was looking for Mr. Reed's address when you came in. Perhaps you remember Tom Reed; though I believe he had left Mr. Lee's before you knew us. He was a second or third cousin of the dear old man, and I thought he might know where Fanny is. I have quite lost sight of her since —"

Mrs. Travers stopped, coloured, and added quickly: "I once met Mr. Reed at dinner—oh, quite two years ago—and he told me then where he was to be found, but I quite forget; some Inn (he was studying for the bar or had just been called to the bar). Perhaps you could find out, or shall I ask Mr. Wall?"

"If you will permit me, I shall make it a point to ascertain."

"Thank you very much, Mr. Ford."

An awkward pause.

"I do not think," resumed the confidential clerk, "I need trespass any longer upon you. The power of attorney which I have will enable me to meet all present contingencies in the way of correspondence. Beyond this, Messrs. Wall and Wreford must advise. I see you have rather a pretty water-colour sketch of the old parsonage, with the river. Very neatly executed! But does it not strike you, now," putting up his glass, "that the clouds are a trifle woolly? And the perspective between those elms rather runs up-hill."

"No, indeed, it does not," said Mrs. Travers with a sigh. "I only see a close resemblance to a scene I love. I had no idea you were such a critic, Mr. Ford."

"I do not claim so high a title" (with the proudest humility); "but I used to do a good deal in that line once, and I flatter myself I have a tolerably correct eye."

"Indeed! I did not think you were an artist in addition to your high business qualifications."

"Pray do not look on me as a mere machine," replied Ford with his peculiar smile. "But I must not keep you standing. I wish you good-day."

"Good-morning; and pray do not forget Mr. Reed's address."

As the door closed behind him, Mrs. Travers stood a moment or two in thought.

"There is a change somewhere; is it

in him, or in myself! He seemed a shade presumptuous, or have I forgotten the equality that once existed between him, myself, and my mother? I think not; but I cannot go back to the old state—and though I will be kind and helpful, he must see in me *only* the widow of his late employer, only the present head of the house of Travers."

From All The Year Round.

THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF ART-NEEDLEWORK.

In these schools an art is taught to poor gentlewomen that would almost make its visitors wish to be poor gentlewomen, so that they might be taught it, and get it done. There are beautiful colours, there are beautiful shades of colours, there are beautiful fabrics, beautiful designs, beautiful modes, and treatments, and textures, and appliances; the gentlewomen approach their workroom through an entrance railed off from the beautiful Horticultural Gardens at South Kensington; they pass by beautiful ferns, and mosses, and grasses, as they descend an easy flight of stairs; and if perfection, together with the delight of it, can come from example, from tone, or intangible atmosphere, into these schools perfection ought always to find its way. As terms of the highest praise are the only fit terms in which to speak of the decorative needlework the pupils have exhibited, it may be at once set down that perfection is what the managers have aimed at; and that, in providing a thoroughly fresh and feminine field for the paid labours of gentlewomen, these managers have answered a loudly reiterated question, and have resolved that a most excellent and desirable work shall resolutely be carried out.

Now, on the face of it, at the outset, the needlework announced to be taught in these new schools is decorative. That makes it costly; that makes it a luxury; that makes it available, at any rate on a large scale, only for the rich. All this must be clearly understood. A very much more complex matter is it to understand what decorative needlework of this sort is; to understand, that is, how crewels and floss silks, cleverly manipulated, can become high-art upholstery and furniture; can afford an infinity of various and ever-varying forms, for taste, and talent, and ingenuity; for these same

royal schools, in short, to find expression in, and place, and motive, or *raison d'être*. The best way, broadly, to get an idea of this is to remember, also broadly, what it is to decorate a house, and what is the ordinary function of a decorator. A curtain, for example, is a curtain; so can any cloth, or hanging, or covering, be bought at a higher or lower price, as cloth, or hanging, or covering, and be nailed up, simple, and remain so. That is one plan of hiding away plain walls, and planks, and chair-seats; of saving the rush of air from passages and doorways, from minuter cracks and crannies. But let this material be subjected to the skilful treatment practised in these schools, and it can be made into a work of art, into a genuine thing of beauty, by patience, industry, and the dexterous passage of the needle. Its value is enhanced a hundredfold, too; it is rendered an heirloom; certain to have centuries of life to it, a possession insuring care and veneration. A large folding-screen shall be cited as an instance. A large folding-screen, let it be pressed upon the attention; not an elegant plaything for the hand; not a hanging fire-shade, called, in a feudal way, a "banner," but a real piece of furniture, solid enough to stand in a vast reception-room, and part off into privacy a good-sized corner of it. Such a screen, being of simple stretched black satin, has so delicious a group of leaves and birds worked upon each panel, that it is made as rare as the apparel Petruccio said he would go to Venice for, to do due honour to his Katharine's wedding-day. The leaves are broad and bold; life-size; two hands long, possibly, and as wide as the palm; the birds are storks, opening their grey wings, standing on their slim rose-pink legs, whilst they nestle against the plants, and preen their feathers with their slender bills. Beautiful effect is gained by these plants and birds being of velvet "appliqué," sewn on to the satin by some edge or cord. Another screen, lent by the Duchess of Newcastle, is quite as chaste, and costly, and artistic. The groundwork of the panels of this appears to be a diaper of gold. It is really amber-coloured manufactured silk, with a tiny diamond pattern woven into it; and on this fabric the pupils have embroidered (in silk) a delicate trail of autumn leaves, bearing russet berries, and being relieved, at intervals, by scarlet and orange butterflies. A third screen, with a background only of Bath-rubber, or a kind of woolly Rus-

sian "crash," would take a great many less bank-notes to pay for it, and yet by the grace of its embroidery (each panel has a trail of flame-coloured nasturtiums, worked in crewel) it could find fit place in the apartments of a queen. Hangings, too, both for curtains and *portières*, are excellent examples of how richness can have richness added to it by the beautiful workmanship executed in these schools. The Duke of Westminster lends a set of curtains, to which the eye is at once attracted. The material is drab, or fawn silk; and it is enriched, all over, by great iris flowers, by splendid roses and convolvuluses, all in "proper" colours and in silk, and kept together by a tracery of stalk or stem, and a charming variety of naturally-formed leaves. Some hangings of crimson satin, lent by Countess Cowper, are of similar design and magnificence, and not less noticeable. Others are of brown velvet, embroidered in coloured wool; of cream-coloured silk (worked for Lady Musgrave), also in wool; and there is a set, of velvet, the property of Lord Warncliffe, remarkable for having the embroidery confined to the border, which is, however, of bold conception, a foot wide, perhaps, and consisting of massive sunflowers, each head as vigorous and lifeful as if it were rearing itself against a sunny wall. But perhaps the most superb curtains exhibited are a pair of costly crimson velvet, worked with a deep margin, and a monogram for the centre-piece, in gold. These are regal. They are no "unreverent robes." They remind of Gremio's "basins and ewers to lave her dainty hands;" of his

... Hangings all of Tyrian tapestry;
His arras, counterpoints;
Costly apparel, tents, and canopies;
Fine linen; Turkey cushions boss'd with pearl;
Valance of Venice gold in needlework.

Certainly, for no homely house, to use Richard Plantagenet's words, are these rich hangings. And yet, on close examination, the gold that edges them, as in the case of the gold in her Grace of Newcastle's folding-screen, is not gold at all, but manufactured silk. This is laid on the velvet (appliqué), kept within the artist's limits by a sewn cord; another example of which appliqué-work is given in some crimson damask-satin hangings belonging to the Duchess of Buccleuch. These have a border of "patines of bright gold," laid on white satin, relieved by massive sprays of leaves and flowers in crimson

velvet; and they as well as the other examples enumerated, give excellent testimony to the value of design, and contrast, and appliance; to the beauty, too, of the feminine art this Royal School of Art-Needlework, with so much taste and wise benevolence, is established to teach and to revive.

In the matter of superb coverings for tables, also, the school is strong. Lord Calthorpe lends one of dark blue velvet, embroidered in amber and blue, and deeply fringed. There are some of various-coloured satins; and there are many specimens of borders, already worked, to be sewn round any velvet or satin to be desired. One of these, lent by Lady Marion Alford, is of velvet laid on to satin, and embroidered in floss silk; others are of fine white linen, cut to a delicate tracery, like Spanish lace, and bound round every edge with gold thread. Nothing could well be more elegant or expensive than these—a background of red silk, or amber silk, showing up the pattern most effectively. They are all, however, of immense price; suitable only for a home whose mistress

Sweeps it through the court with troops of ladies,

Bearing a duke's revenues on her back.

The very train of her worst wearing gown
Better worth than all my father's lands.

And they must not be mentioned without a companion statement that there are other materials and other styles of work that can be supplied at much less cost. There are white serge, or camlet; table-cloths (to mention a few) with a margin only, of embroidery, worked in coloured wool; there is a cloth of *feuille-morte*, or sage, edged with a band of white cloth, and that embroidered with bold yellow flowers; another of these has a band of darker velvet, lightened by a wreath of great white daisies conventionally treated; and there are cloths of serge, banded with other serge, of deeper or paler tone; there are white "huckabacks" bordered with crimson twill, bearing scarcely any embroidery at all. Indeed, to beautify for the mere sake of beauty, and to take ordinary materials to work this magic upon, are the legitimate labours of decoration; are, most especially, the legitimate labours of the thousands of unemployed and cultivated English women, anxious to decorate their own or other people's homes; and these

have not been overlooked by the patronesses, and council of the South Kensington school. One way in which this is shown is on a small piece of druggel lying on the exhibition floor. It is just a foot-stand on coming out of the bath, perhaps; an oblong piece, twelve inches by eighteen, of the common "duffel" grey; its cost, a few pence. A gentlewoman's hand has taken this uninviting material (which would lie about an unthrifty house to get "dog's-eared" or kicked heedlessly away), a gentlewoman's sense of beauty has been applied to it, and it has a "button-hole" edge of rich claret worsted, a worked band an inch or two within this, and a centre-piece of thick leaves and flowers. Similar treatment has given value to a bath blanket, which is prettily, but very easily, embroidered all round with scarlet wool; and has "repair'd with double riches" some common druggel used to keep draughts from open doorways, and called, technically, *portières*. The worsted used to embellish these is coarse and cheap; the patterns are wide apart and bold; but there is the material improved, by many times, in price, and forming an object that the eye is glad to see. Strips of embroidered linen, to be sewn round washing-dresses, are shown in the school, too, a hand wide, and as many yards long as may be required. The embroidery is in colours; it can be seen at once to be a work of art by hand, not machine-facture; and from having a ground of linen, not cotton, it would remain a work of art after even half a century of laundresses' wear and tear. Cushion-covers approach, again, more nearly to the ordinary "fancy-work" English women are apt to do. There are plenty at South Kensington; yet, such as there are, resemble in no way the "boarding-school" work that is prevalent, and that requires no particular art-sense from its workers, and no marked cultivation of brain. The covers exhibited are, some of them, of white satin, with a delicious gathering of blue forget-me-nots; others, of olive satin, with bouquets in "proper" colours, harmoniously treated, though not confined to one sort of flower. There is art in these designs, too, it must be remembered. They are not blotches of colour, unnaturally "shaded," growing out of nowhere, printed and stamped, to be reproduced by the score. They proclaim the same tender perceptions in the designer as are known to be in the mind of the painter of a delicate picture; of the composer of an en-

nobling and graceful melody. And, though the designer is not the worker (for art-masters of well-proved skill give their aid to the essential particular of design), the gentlewomen who wield the needle bear the same relation to the designers as the engraver does to the painter, the player to the creative musician; and, unless the art-sense of an interpreter be in sympathy with the originator, unless the finger have a dainty touch, it is well known that the best creation suffers, and has a very bare result.

Notice of these royal schools would not be complete without a word about some chair-covers worked for the empress of Russia. They are of satin, a very dark green; and each one bears a bouquet of floss-silk flowers. In a case near to these is a design for a folding-screen, for the Princess of Wales; in course of execution, it may be presumed, or in that completer condition, "sent home," since only the artist's drawing is shown, with the colours he recommends. A design, from the hand of Princess Louise, has an interest of its own. It is a large white lily and lily leaves, arranged for repetition and as a border, some nine or ten inches wide, for hangings, it may be, and table-coverings, *en suite*. Princess Helena goes farther still in practical co-operation with the aims of the school. Her Royal Highness, being the president, and taking a prominent part in council and committee, shows a piece of her own embroidery. It is a geometric pattern, worked on black satin, in scarlet and amber silk.

O that thou knew'st

The royal occupation! Thou should'st see
A workman in 't!

comes into the mind naturally, in contemplating this. And her Majesty the queen, it must be added, is not unrepresented. In another case there is a robe, or jupe, exhibited, which is being prepared for her Majesty's own wear. The material is black satin; it is cut "*rasé*," the queen's lady-subjects will be interested to hear (which means it is to shave the ground, in pretty French descriptiveness, not to sweep it); it is quilted and wadded; with a running pattern, floriated, covering it entirely, and making it of consistent elegance and price. "The king's daughter . . . shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework. . . . Thy raiment was of silk and brodered work." It is all good; it is all queenly, and what is more to the purpose womanly; and it reopens, under

most favourable conditions, a large field in which women's labour can never have masculine competition, and which woman has always had entirely for her own. Much to be congratulated, also, are poor gentlewomen at having royal ladies over them who know their wants, and their sensibilities, and cultivation; who have, too, thus allied themselves to bring a beautiful art into new prominence and demand, for the very wise and benevolent reason that it is entirely within gentlewomen's compass and must, for its own sake, be thoroughly congenial to them. England has, whether happily or unhappily, women who must work; England has women who will work; women who have culture, and courage, and the resolution to overcome the disagreeableness of work, the physical fatigue of it, its mental annoyance and ignoble strain; it only remained, therefore, to find the right work fitted for these women, to give it dignity, to create a taste for it, to bring it to the market, and offer it at a price. And, since the Royal School of Art-Needlework has stepped in precisely to effect all this, and seems to have discovered a right royal road (at last) in which it may all be effected, nothing has to be said beyond a good hope that it will have strength and health, and a long prosperity.

In these columns, the idea of the women of the present day reverting to the needlework of their ancestresses has been advocated before. It is true such advocacy was to the point of the beautiful and durable industry being cultivated as a pleasure, not as means of bread; but the fact of its being cultivated as a means of earning money does not touch the beauty, and the womanliness, and the desirability, however; and, in fact, gives every argument used then the same force now, and more. An immense opening exists in art-needlework, too, leading the women of the present day leagues and leagues beyond their ancestresses. Everything that civilization lacked centuries ago, civilization glories in now; and this must bring as new an aspect to this art as it has brought to other arts elsewhere. The mere action of mind upon mind, by people getting quickly to each other owing to convenience of locomotion; by people seeing what other people have done; the bold eye learning from the quaint; the pale treatment blossoming from admixture with the rich; the too hard hand recognizing the beauty and the bounty of the free; the mere fact

of people being brought acquainted with other uses, with other fabrics and materials, with other forms, must have an immense effect, in the end, on the art-needlework of to-day, as compared with the art-needlework of centuries bygone; and it will be well that this should be actively borne in recollection by the council of the royal schools. One curious fact about this inevitable growth and alteration is, that the precise way of it cannot be foretold. Like other growths, it is growth, not fabrication, and it must be left to the development of time. Let the council, being sure it will come, be on the watch for it, that is all; and let them go on all the more hopefully with their labours, knowing that, though they plant for only one sort of fruit, others will come, no less necessary and nourishing; and that these fruits will be their fruits, and should not be looked upon as unexpected or alien.

One result from the establishment of schools for art-needlework is perhaps so manifest, it may as well at once be pointed out. If the art be good for gentlewomen, it will be good for other women, not born gentle, but perhaps as cultivated, as full of patience and art-feeling, as necessary. Needlework is classic. Josiah broke down the houses near by the house where the women wove hangings; Solomon decked a bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved work, with fine linen of Egypt; set a woman far above rubies who laid her hands to the spindle, who made herself and her household coverings of tapestry, and silk, and scarlet; Moses wished for hangings of fine twined linen, wrought with needlework; Valeria found Volumnia and Virgilia "manifest housekeepers," and did what she could to make them "play the idle housewife" with her for an afternoon. "What, are you sewing here? Come, lay aside your stitchery! I would your cambric were as sensible as your finger, that you might leave pricking it for pity!" Anne Hathaway must have used her needle resolutely; with, possibly, somewhat too persistent and too flippant will; how otherwise could Shakespeare have written so humorously:

What is this? A sleeve? . . .

What! up and down, carv'd like an apple tart,
With snip, and nip, and cut, and slish, and
slash!

And with all this evidence of the adherence of women to ornamentation by the needle, let the council of the Royal

School of Art-Needlework congratulate themselves heartily if they are the means of the art being cultivated much more largely than it could be within their walls, and if it reaches all over the country, and is practised by women of all grades. Some comic satisfaction may come to the council, too, anent a new species of what may be called benefit of clergy. Nineteenth-century young ladies have been in the habit of inundating bachelor and favourite curates with braces and slippers, worked on canvas, in "lovely" Berlin wool. If, after this loan exhibition, young ladies (without the prospect of immediate recompense for it) will embroider bath foot-stands, bath blankets, borders for table-covers and hangings, and panels for folding-screens, they may be quite sure their presents will be very much more useful and acceptable than they are now, and the Royal School of Art-Needlework may be thanked for having brought about a very practical, albeit it may be an utterly unintended, revolution.

From The London Medical Record.

THE INFLUENCE OF ARCTIC COLD ON MAN.

LIEUTENANT PAYER, the Austrian Arctic explorer, has been laying some of the results of his explorations before the Geographical Society of Vienna. Referring to the influence of extreme cold on the human organism, he related that on March 14, 1874, he and his companions made a sledge journey over the Samiklar glacier, in order to make observations of Francis-Joseph Land. On that day the cold marked forty degrees (Reaumur) below zero. Notwithstanding this intense cold, M. Payer and a Tyrolese went out before sunrise to make observations and sketch. The sunrise was magnificent; the sun seemed surrounded, as it does at a high degree of cold, by small suns, and its light appeared more dazzling from the contrast with the extreme cold. The travellers were obliged to pour rum down their throats so as not to touch the edge of the metal cups, which would have been as dangerous as if they had been red-hot; but the rum had lost all its strength and its liquidity, and was as flat and thick as oil. It was impossible to smoke either cigars, or tobacco in short pipes, for very soon nothing but a piece of ice remained in the mouth. The metal of the instru-

ments was just like red-hot iron to the touch, as were some lockets, which some of the travellers romantically, but imprudently, continued to wear next the skin. M. Payer says that so great an amount of cold paralyzes the will, and that, under its influence, men, from the unsteadiness of their gait, their stammering talk, and the slowness of their mental operations, seem as if they were intoxicated. Another effect of cold is a tormenting thirst, which is due to the evaporation of the moisture of the body. It is unwholesome to use snow to quench the thirst, as it brings an inflammation of the throat, palate, and tongue. Besides, enough can never be taken to quench the thirst; as a temperature of 30° to 40° below zero makes it taste like molten metal. Snow-eaters in the North are considered as feeble and effeminate, in the same way as an opium-eater in the East. The groups of travellers who traversed the snow-fields were surrounded by thick vapours formed by the emanations from their bodies, which became condensed notwithstanding the furs in which the travellers were enveloped. These vapours fell to the ground with a slight noise, frozen into the form of small crystals, and rendered the atmosphere thick, impenetrable, and dark. Notwithstand-

ing the humidity of the air, a disagreeable sensation of dryness was felt. Every sound diffused itself to a very long distance; an ordinary conversation could be heard at a hundred paces off, whilst the report of guns from the top of high mountains could scarcely be heard. M. Payer explains this phenomenon by the large quantity of moisture in the Arctic atmosphere. Meat could be chopped and mercury used in the shape of balls. Both smell and taste become greatly enfeebled in these latitudes, strength gives way under the paralyzing influence of the cold, the eyes involuntarily close and become frozen. When locomotion stops, the sole of the foot becomes insensible. It is somewhat curious that the beard does not freeze, but this is explained from the air expired falling immediately transformed into snow. The cold causes dark beards to become lighter; the secretions of the eyes and nose always increase, whilst the formation of perspiration altogether ceases. The only possible protection against the cold is to be very warmly clothed, and to endeavour as much as possible to prevent the condensation of the atmosphere, whilst the much-vaunted plan of anointing and blackening the body are pronounced to have no real value.



END OF VOL. XL

